Imprinted at
London by Iohn Awdely
dwelling in litle Britain
streete without
Aldersgate.
(✣)

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Right honc

his very good Lord, A

Earle of Warwick, Maiſter of

ieſties Ordinance, Knight of the noble

the Garter, and one of her highn

moſt honourable priuie Councel, Geor

Gifford wiſheth increaſe of al true hap-

pines & honour, with the conti

nuall comfort of a good

conſcience.

NOthing doubt (right honourable) but that it will ſeeme great raſhnes vnto ſome, and no ſmal folly, to offer and preſent ſo ſimple and ſlender a booke as this is, vnto your Lordſhip: for what doth it ſeeme to bring with it worthie the perſon of a Noble man? There is no pompe in the manner of ſpeech, for it is rude and country like: the matter it ſelfe is not handled as a diſputation betweene deepe diuines, but after the manner of plough men and car-

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

at abſurditie therefore appea-
s, that an honourable perſon
ignitie ſhould be called for, as
to ſtand by and hear ſuch ſpeak.
cauſe there is therfore that I ſhold
r ſom reaſon of this my boldenes,
ich I will willingly doe, to vſe that
nich the heathen Poet ſaith:

Si canimus ſyluas, ſyluæ ſint conſule dignæ.

Will not ſuffice: for although reſpe-
cting the things which I handle, becauſe
they belong to the trees that are planted
in the Lords Orchard, they doe as farre
excel the woods and groues, as the vine
doth the bramble buſh. yet neuertheleſſe
he hath ſo richly decked his baſe & beg-
gerly matter, hee hath ſo clothed it in
ſilkes from top to toe, and hath hanged
ſo many iewels vpon it: that it ſhal finde
entertainement, and be thought meete
for the courts of princes, where as mine
being very porely clad, wil be reiected.
I wil expreſſe therefore a better reaſon
of my doing, which is this. As thoſe
which haue corne fieldes, think it not a

thing

thing vnmeete to be told by their seruats of thistles & weedes which would hinder & mar the corn, if they prouide not to haue them plucked vp: euē so I know that it is not an vnworthy thing to shew vnto those which are of highe calling, the hurtful & dangerous weedes which would ouergrow and choke the heauēly seed of the gospel, sowen in the Lords field. When as our church therefore & common wealth, being the Lords husbandrie, is ouergrowne with weedes & almost laide waste, I see no cause wherefore I may iustly be blamed, for giuing notice thereof in sōe part vnto your honour. Seeing their principall causes and fountaines frō whēce corruptiōs flow are to be taken away and dryed vp by those whō God hath placed in the highest roomes. Among which the want of a sincere ministerie of the woorde is the greatest through absence of which, there is a flood of ignorance and darknes, ouerflowing the most part of the land: the feare of God is banished from the great

reſt parte: the woonderfull heapes and piles of ſinne, which ſhould bee waſhed and cleanſed away by the word, do vndoubtedly with one voice cry alowd in the eares of the Lord, for vengeance vpon the whole realme. The papiſtes cannot be conuerted, but hardened & turned out of the way, there is ſo foule diſorder, and ſo many ſtumbling blockes caſt in the way. The Diuell hath elbowe rome to ſpreade abrode, to plant & water all kinde of errours, ſo fewe there be to withſtand him. But to come to that particular which I hādle in this treatiſe: there are the moſt in number, who hauing Poperie taken from them and not taught throughly and ſufficiently in the Goſpel, doe ſtand as men indifferēt, ſo that they may quietly inioy the worlde, they care not what religion come: they are like naked men fitte and readie for any coate almoſt that may bee put vpon them. The life of theſe is exceeding prophane: they haue hardned thēſelues in their ſinnes, by reaſon which they gather

ther partly out of their owne braine, & partly out of some sayings in the word, by which they cloke & defed their own corrupt wayes. I haue therefore gathered the most commō principles of their faith and religion, by which they arme themselues, against true repentance, and right vnderstanding: I haue not noted all, neither haue I medled with those seuerall grosse absurdities, whiche eache hath proper to himself, for that should be infinite. I trust your Lordeship will rightly construe my good meaning, and take in good worth this simple treatise: pitying the case of the poore church of Christ, which is so ful of greeuous sicknesses and sores, that vnlesse she be releeued and cured, she wil scarce be able to continue life. She cannot but most humbly craue this dutie at the hands of those which are neere about her deare Nurse: From whom she hath nowe long time receiued wonderfull protection and defence against aduersaries: that they make knowne her state, and labour the recovery

very & retaining of her health: Because it doth stand not only with their eterna glorye in the worlde to come, but also with their honourable estate in this life. Which cannot be established to flobish in continuance vnlesse the lorde God haue his throne so erected in the middest of her that she may florishe. For where he is dishonored and displeased of those whom shee nourisheth in her bosome, her case is daungerous, for it is against all wise pollicie to make him an aduersarie, who hath all power, & of himselfe is able to roote out and destroy mighty kingdomes: so that if she keep in fauour & league with him, there is no feare of any other.

This Lord of Lordes, and most mighty king increase abundātly in you all heauenly & spirituall graces, with increase of honour in this world, to his glory & your eternal comforte. Amen.

Your honours most humble to
commaund George Gifford.

A briefe discourse of certaine pointes of the religion, which is among the common sorte of Christians: which may bee termed the Countrie diuinitie: with a plaine and manifest confutation of the same, after the order of a Dialogue.

Zelotes: Atheos.

Zelotes. VVEll ouertaken my friende.

Atheos. I thanke you Sir.

Zelotes. How farre do ye trauell this way?

Atheos. Twentie miles.

Zelot. Doe you dwell in Essex?

Ath. Yea, not farre from Clelmesford.

Zelot. What call yee the Towne where yee dwell?

Ath. G. B.

Zelot. Haue yee a preacher there?

A Ath. We

Ath. We haue an honest man our Curat.

Zelot. Doth he teach his flocke?

Ath. He doth his good will and more ye cannot require of a man.

Zelot. Yee did commende him euen now, to be an honest man.

Ath. Commende him: yea I maye commende him: I am perswaded wee haue the beste Priest in this Countrie, wee wouldе bee lothe too forgoe him for the Learnedst of them all.

Zelot. I praye yee let me heare what his vertues be for which yee doe commend him so highly.

Ath. Hee is as gentle a person as euer I see: a very good fellowe, hee will not sticke when good Fellowes and honest men meet together too spende his groate at the Alehouse: I cannot tell, they preache and preache, but hee doth liue as well as the beste of them all. I am afrayde when hee is gone wee shall neuer haue the like againe.

Zelot Bee these the greate vertues which yee doe commende hym for

for, hee may haue all these and yet bee more meete for to keepe swine, then too bee a Shephearde ouer the flocke of Christe, is hee able to teach the people, and doth hee instruct them in Gods worde?

Ath. I knowe not what teaching yée woulde haue, hee doth reade the seruice, as well as any of them all, and I thinke there is as good edifying in those prayers and homilies, as in any that the Vicar cannes make: let vs learne those first. Prayers homelies

Zelot. That is not all which is required in a Minister, for a boy of tenne yeeres olde cannes doe all this: doeth hee not teache them too knowe the will of GOD and reproue naughtines among the people?

Ath. Yes that hee doeth, for if there bee any that do not agree, hee will seeke for, too make them friendes: for hee will gette them to playe a game or two at Bowles or Cardes and too drynke together at the Alehouse: I thinke it a Godly waye, too make Charitie: hee is none of these busse Controulers: for

if hee were, he could not be so well liked of some (and those not of the meanest) as hee is.

Zelot. Doe yee call the Preachers of Gods woorde busie Controllers? doe they goe further then Gods woorde doth leade them?

Ath. We may call them busie controllers, I thinke we shall doe nothing shortly, as poore a man as I am, I would not for foure shillinges that we had one of them: there be more of my mind.

Zelot. Some poore men perhaps.

Ath. Nay, the best in the Parishe, who would not so well like of our Curat, if he should meddle that way.

Zelot. I perceiue nowe what manner of man your Curat is, and I see like maister like scoller.

Ath. Why so I pray ye?

Zelot. Why so, I smell how vnmeete he is, and also howe ignorant you are. Let me question a little while with yee concerning that which yee haue vttered.

Ath. I trust I haue vttered nothing but that which doth become an honest man.

Zelot. Nay

Zelot. Nay all your speeche doth bewraye that yee are a carnall man, for you haue made a verye fine description of a good Curate, what meane yee when yee say hee is a good fellowe, and will not stick to spende his mony among good fellowes, is it not because hee is a potte companion.

Ath. Doe yée mislike good fellowshipp, is it not lawfull for honest men to drinke & bée merrie together?

Zelot. I doe not mislike true friendshipe, which is in the Lorde, knitte in true godlinesse, but I mislike this vice, which ouerfloweth euery where, that Drunkardes meete together and sitte quaffing and the Minister whiche shoulde reproove them, to bee one of the chiefe: when he shoulde bee at his studie, to bee vppon the Alebench at Cardes or dice.

Ath. I perceiue you are one of those curious, and precise fellowes, whiche will allow no recreation, what would yée haue men doe? we shal doe nothing shortly. You would haue them sitte moping alwayes at their bookes, I like not that.

Zelot. Nay my frinde, I doe not allowe that recreation, whiche prophane

men call so, whiche is no recreation, but a torment to a Godly minde, to see men drunken, to heare them sweare, and rayle, to spende theyr goodes and their time so lewdely, and hee that shoulde teach them, to bee a Ringleader: as there be many as it seemeth, whiche are entred into the ministery for none other purpose, but too liue an idle life, to haue leysure to play at Cardes, or Tables, and bowles all the Weeke. And therefore they haue no skil to teache, but like vnsauerie salte, are not good euen for the Dunghill. Mark. 9. 50

Math. 5. 13. Luk. 14. 34. 35

Ath. These thinges were vsed before you were borne, and will bee when you are gone. So long as men thinke no hurt when they play and bee merry.

Zelot. I perceiue yee are of the right stampe, yee are light vppon an argument whiche may well bee termed olde Suerbe, because it bringeth a reason whiche doeth stitche by manye, when all other reasons forsake them. But let vs pull this olde fellowe out of his newe coate, and yee shall see what a leane shrimpe hee is, and so feeble, that hee cannot goe on stilts: these thinges were vsed saye you, before you were borne, so were all other naughtie vi-

ees, are they nowe good becauſe they bee olde? Becauſe men committed them before I was borne, and will doe when I am dead.

Ath. I meane not ſo, but there were as wiſe men, and wyſer then be now among our fore Fathers, and they would not haue vſed nor allowed ſuch thinges, if they had not beene good: they knew well enough what they did. Let not vs bee more precile then they were.

Zelot. I perceiue you grounde your fayth and your doynges vpon men, and not vpon Gods worde.

Ath. I praye GOD I may followe our fore Fathers, and doe no worſe then they did: what ſhoulde wee ſeeke for too bee wyſer or better then they: I woulde wee coulde doe but as well as they did.

Zelot. Doe you not thinke that there were among our forefathers, theeues, murtherers, adulterers, drunkards, and ſuch like.

Ath. I thinke there haue beene alwayes euill doers, and wilbe while the worldes end.

Zelot. Woulde yee haue vs to follow those, and to take their vices?

Ath. We are not to follow any thing but that whiche is good: and those whiche were godly and wise.

Zelot. Is there any thing good, but that whiche GOD setteth downe in his worde: and were any wise and Godly, but such as did followe the wil of God expressed in his worde?

Ath. There is nothing good but of GOD, and suche as doe as he commaundeth.

Zelot. Then you see olde suerse layd flat vppon the grounde, and your lustie champion is manifested to bee but skinne and bones, and the same draugh rotten: for nowe by your owne confession doeth followe, that the worde of God is the onelie rule, and wee must followe our forefathers no further then they follow the word of God. You must not followe Dauid, nor Abraham in euery thing they did. Furthermore all these naughtie vices and corrupt customes came from the wicked forefathers, and not from the godly, which followed Gods worde.

Ath. That is true, but I will follow

low our forefathers, nowe there is no loue, then they liued in friendshippe, and made merrie together, nowe there is no good neighbourhood: nowe euerye man for himselfe, and are readie to pull one another by the throate.

Zelot. There are but a fewe of your minde in this thing, are there?

Ath. Yes, the greatest parte: for I know almost none, but they will affirme this matter.

Zelot. If the greatest parte bee of your mind, wherfore is there not then a greate deale of loue and friendshippe where you say there is none: why doe yee not being the moste in number, repayre the ruines of that olde faithfull friendship, which ye say is decayed: yee say that there was loue and friendship, and yee seeeme to lament the want of them, and yet there is none in your selues: for yee be verye full of malice and strife: is there anye buzzard so blinde, but that he may espie your grosse folly and vanitie in this poynt: when with open mouth: yee crye for loue, loue, and bee the greatest enimies thereunto youre selues. *want of Loue*

Moreouer ye followe your owne fonde and

and doating opinion, that yee imagine a thing whiche neuer was, for the world hath euer beene like it selfe full of debate and strife, a verye fewe in all ages whiche haue had true loue: Agayne, you call none loue, but that carnall loue, whiche is in eating and drinking, and other fooliſhe delightes. That whiche is the true loue, you condemne to bee hatred: For if a man admoniſhe and reprooue you for any naughtie vice, whiche is the greateſt loue, by and by yee ſtampe and ſtare like madde men, and ſaye nowe there is no loue, except a man doe flatter yee, and bee partaker of your foule and beaſtely ſinnes, yee are at deadly hatred with him. But let vs returne agayne too Syr Robert, yee ſayde hee was as good a Liuer as the beſt of them all.

Ath. I ſay ſo ſtill, for hee is content with his liuing: many of your ſpirituall men are neuer ſatiſfied: for with that paye liuing he hath, he doth keepe a good houſe, and doeth feede the poore.

Zelot. You prooue him to bee a good Liuer, by comparing him with thoſe whiche are woorſe: It is all one as

as if a manne woulde prooue a theefe whiche hath ſtollen twentye pounde too bee a good theefe, becauſe hee is not ſo euill as hee which hath ſtollen a thouſande poundes.

Ath. Yée doe not well to compare true men with theeues.

Zelot. Is not hee a theefe which doth take the hier, and doth not that whiche hee ſhoulde doe for it.

Ath. Yée is as good as a theefe, I thinke ſo.

Zelot. Doe not they robbe them whiche take the liuing and doe not feede the flocke. Let me aske yee a queſtion, if a man robbe and ſteale and then keepe a good houſe, and feaſt his neighboures with it, and bee a Murtherer, will his good houſe keeping make him a good Liuer? *Spirit.*

Ath. No that it will not.

Zelot. Let mee aske yee another queſtion, which is the woorſe murtherer, he which doth murther the body, or hee which doth murther the ſoule?

Ath. Hee whiche doth murther the ſoule.

Zelot. Then

Zelot. Then hee whiche ſhoulde feed mens bodies committed vnto him, and doth pyne them to death, is a murtherer, and hee whiche ſhould feede mens ſoules & doth ſterue them, is a greater murtherer, and ſo his good houſekeeping cannot make him a good man, robbing ſo many, and killing ſo many.

Ath. I will not beléeue that hée doth kill any.

Zelot. That is becauſe yee will not beMatth. 15. 14. Luk. 6. 39 leeue the ſaying of Chriſte: if the blinde leade the blind they both fal into the ditch: nor that God will ſaue men by the woorde preached. Rom. 10. 14. 17.

Ath. I hope we be not blinde, I truſt we beléeue all well.

Zelot. You are blinde and ſhoulde haue a guyde to leade yee the way to heauen, and to inſtruct yee in true godlineſſe.

Ath. I will not learne the way to heauen of any man, for I hope I haue as good a faith and as good a ſoule to God ward as the beſt learned of them all.

Zelot. Wherby do you try your goodneſſe & your faith any other way, then by your owne blinde fantaſie?

Ath. I

Ath. I meane well: I hurt no man: nor I thinke no man any hurte: I loue God aboue all: and put my whole truſt in him: what woulde yee haue more? they preache and teach, they can tell vs no more but this: when they haue all ſayd what they can.

Zelot. Nowe yee tumble it vp together in deede: I ſee well it is no ſmall trouble to bring an ignorant man, for to ſee his folly.

Ath. I haue vttered my conſcience: if I ſay not well, I am readye for to learne.

Zelot. What neede you learne when yee knowe all afore hande euen as much as all the Preachers can tell yee?

Ath. We take me at the worſt, the beſt of vs all may learne.

Zelot. You ſayde that yee loue GOD aboue all: and you thinke no man no hurt: I take it your meaning is that yee doe loue GOD with all your heart, and your neighbour as your ſelfe, and more then this cannot be taught.

Ath. Wee ſhoulde do this, if wee doe it not, God forgiue vs.

Zelot. This is all, is it not, what needeth

deth any more teaching?

Ath. Let men doe this first, and afterwarde, if they will learne more, let them.

Zelot. Yee giue very graue aduise now, if there were any to followe it.

Ath. I haue no learning, but I thinke if men woulde doe this, it would not bee so euill as it is.

Zelot. If euery thing which is spoken truely, be spoken wisely, then you haue vttered a very wise saying, for I am sure there cannot be a truer. I beleeue in deede ye haue no learning, and I am sure as you say, if men should doe that, there would not be so much euill among vs.

Ath. Yee thinke peraduenture that I speake like a fole, I woulde I were as wise as those which I heare say so.

Zelot. Haue yee manye of these great Wise men, which would haue men first fulfill the ten Commandements and then run to heare Sermons.

Ath. All things are well spoken which are well taken: if they be not wise, I praye God make them wise: I haue nought to doe with them.

Zelot. Yee

Zelot. Yee are a playne man and haue skyll in outwarde thinges, will yee giue mee leaue too aske you a queſtion in a matter wherein yee haue vnderſtanding.

Ath. I thanke God I dare anſwere to a queſtion.

Zelot. Are ye a carpenter or a maſon?

Ath. I haue no ſkil that way.

Zelot. Then if there be a great houſe of tymber and lone, to builde, you can not build it?

Ath. If there were no better buylders then I, there woulde not bee ſo many gay houſes.

Zelot. Ilone ſhoulde ſay here is a very fayre hout to bee buylded, it is no more but to ly a good foundation, too rayſe vp the valles and to finiſhe the roofe. You knowe his all: therefore yee can build it for ye knowe all.

Ath. I knw this is al: but I can do nother a whit of, vnles a carpenter or a buylder doe teache me.

Zelot. Y: ſay well, euen ſo too loue GOD with ll our hearte, with all our mynde, and our neighbour as our ſelfe,

is all, but wee knowe not howe to doe one iotte of it, vnlesse wee bee taught it out of Gods word.

Ath. God graunt wee may, for there be ouer many which doe not regarde it.

Zelot. Let mee nowe aske you further, put case one shoulde say vnto you, thus, you knowe all that is to bee done in buylding an house: the foundation the walles and the roofe, doe these first, if yee will learne any more, yee may go to some Carpenter.

Ath. There is no man so foolishe, to giue a man that counsell.

Zelot. It is the Counsell you gaue, and the wise men which ye spake of, which woulde haue men first to dcand afterward to learne.

Ath. May to doe tha they knowe, and afterwarde to learne wyse: for there was neuer more knowlege and lesse doing.

Zelot. It is a verye pitifull case to see howe the worlde is blinded yee bring not this out of your own bouge: for there be very many wise and iolly Iades, whiche stand much vppon this with you speake: they neuer vnderstoode the whiche Solo-

mon

mon sayth Prouerb, 1. cap. 22. ver. Ye fooles be enemies vnto knowledge, or hate knowledge. Neither doe they knowe that which Saint Paul speaketh. 1. Cor. 8. 2. If any man thinke he knoweth any thing, hee knoweth nothing as yet, as he ought to knowe. They neuer considered what the holy Ghost saith in the latter ende of the fifte chapter to the Hebrues vers. 12. Where he doth sharply reproue them, because they were children in vnderstanding. Neither doe they know that al well doing proceedeth from fayth, and faith doth increase through knowledge: it grieueth me to stande vpon the matter, the saying is so buzardly. 1. Cor. 8. 2. Heb. 5. 12.

Ath. You would haue all men diuines, I thinke it is not for plowemen to meddel with the scriptures.

Zelot. You thinke so, but I pray you to whom speaketh the Lord by the Prophet Esay, whē he saith: My people perish for want of knowledge. Vnto whome speaketh the Lorde by the Prophete Hoseas. Chap. 4. 1. 2. When he sayth: there is no trueth, there is no mercy, nor knowledg of god in the land. But swearing, lying, killing, theeuing, committing adultery. &c. Vnto whome wrote Saynt Paule saying. Brethren bee children in Esay. 4. 6 Hose. 4. 1. 2. & 4. 1. 2

malice, be not children in vnderstãding, &
2 pet. 1. 5. 6. 7. 8 vnto whom wrote Saint Peter exhorting so much vnto knowledge?

Ath. I thinke knowledg doth make men the woorse, for there be no woorse men, then many that be great scripture mẽ: none will deceiue a man sooner then they: they will speake a man faire before his face, and bee readye behinde his backe for to cutt his throate.

Zelot. It seemeth that you are no small man, there is a great deale of good stuffe in you, if you woulde vtter it.

Ath. I tel yée my minde plainly. I will not flatter any man.

Zelot. Ye need not tel me that, I know what manner of man yee be. Let vs come to your last words, yee did speake very lewdly, doe yee thinke, that knowledge doth make men woorse.

Ath. I heare many say so: if I speake lewdly there be a number moe beside mée, that doe so.

Zelot. If knowledge make men the woorse, then is it a thing that is not good of it selfe, for that whiche is good can not make a man euill: is there any beast whiche will say, That to knowe GOD or the will of God

GOD whiche is moſt holy and pure, can make a man the woorſe: No theſe men are more then beaſtes. Againe, the more a man knoweth of God the woorſe he ſhould be: a very filthy blaſphemie.

Moreouer you are greately deceyued, when ye thinke that all thoſe whiche canne talke of the Scriptures haue knowledge, for there be very many carnall Pratlers, which ſeeme for to knowe much, and yet are as blynd as Buzzards: theſe are naughty men, not becauſe they haue knowledge but becauſe they want knowledge.

Ath. I cannot tell, a man ſhall heare them ſaye a great deale out of the Bible.

Zelot. No doubt a great deale more the they vnderſtand: now when ſuch do not liue well, doth it followe that Gods worde maketh them woorſe, nay yee be all blinde Aſſes whiche cannot ſee, that becauſe there is verye little true vnderſtanding of Gods woorde among men, therefore there is ſo much vncleanneſſe: For as the holie Ghoſt ſaith. Pſal. 119. 9. Wherwithall ſhal a young mā clenſe his way euen by taking heed ther- Pſal. 119 9
to according to thy word. Nowe when men doe not vnderſtande the worde, howe ſhall

they take heede to their wayes for to guide them by the same. And when God saith the woorde doth clense vs, his meaning must needes bee, that all suche as are not purged thereby, are fowle and filthye in his eyes.

Ath. We haue of your Preachers, trim pulpit men, and can say very well: but their deedes are as euil as other mens, for who is more coueteous then they? they are neuer cõtent vntill they haue heaped liuing vppon liuing.

Zelot. Such skilful men as you, thinke if a man can preache or rather (as a number doe) prattle and haue a rowling tongue and can make some shewe of learning, that by and by he is a trim man, and hath great knowledge: when as indeede hee hath no true knowledge, for I count him too haue true knowledge, whiche hath so learned Christ, that he is become a newe creature. Therefore Saint Iohn in the 3. chap. 5, 6. ver. of his first Epistle speakyng of Christ sayth: That hee was made manifest too take away our sinnes, and in him is no sinne. Whosoeuer abydeth in him sinneth not. Whosoeuer sinneth hath not seene him nor knowne him. Likewise in the first booke of Samuel, cap. 2,

2. Cor. 5. 17. Gal. 6. 15.

cap.2.verſ.12.It is ſayde by the ſonnes of Ely, that they were the ſonnes of Belial, and knew not God: and yet they were inſtructed in the Law and taught the people. And for mine owne part I could neuer perceiue that any wicked man could preach worth a button: I meane concerning the chiefe thing required in preaching, which is the declaration of the power of the ſpirit which ought for to appeare, to the cõuerſion of ſinfull men. For to lay opẽ points of doctrine, they may doe it well.

Ath. It is not for vs that are ſimple men for to iudge who doeth well and who doth not.

Zelot. Yes that it is, for Saint Iohn ſaieth trie the ſpirits whether they be of God: Our Sauiour Chriſt ſaieth, my ſheepe heare my voyce a ſtraunger they will not heare. Wherevpon it doth followe that hee which knoweth not when pure doctrine & wholeſome is vttered, is not as yet among the nũber of the ſheepe of Chriſt. For if he were indued with the ſpirit of god, he ſhould by the ſame ſpirit feele when wholeſome doctrine is deliuered vnto him.

Ath. If a man be learned, then hee ſhall be able to iudge what is ſayde rightly:

otherwise hée cannot tell.

Zelot. It is not learning alone whiche must iudge of sound preaching, for there be many learned men which cānot iudge well, as also there be many vnlearned which are very well able to discerne, all lyeth in this point the doctrine is of God, & not of men, and therefore those doe feele it, and iudge rightly whether they be learned or vnlearned, whom God doth inwardly teach with his spirite: for this cause S. Paule, 1. Cor. 14 doth shew that the word of God is so to be layd open in the congregation, that if there come in a man vnlearned or an infidel, he may be reproued & iudged & the secrets of his heart made manifest. For if the word be not preached vnto the cōsciences of men, it goeth away like a dead sound. But we goe into many matters, I haue not forgotten your former words: but perhaps ye wold be loth to come to that agayne.

Ath. **I am not ashamed of any thing, which I said, and I hope I néede not.**

Zelot. No, your wares are so fine, ye need not care who viewe them, you loue God aboue all and with all your heart.

Ath. **That I doe, or els I were a beast, I would hee were hanged which doeth not**

that.

that.

Zelot. Yee loue your neighbour as your selfe?

Ath. If I doe not, I pray GOD forgiue mée: I am sure no manne can accuse mée.

Zelot. Then you looke by this meanes to come to Heauen?

Ath. I hope if there bée but three in all this country, goe to heauen, I shalbe one of them, I meane so well.

Zelot. Ye know the cõmandements of God, and fulfill them also, doe ye not?

Ath. I thanke God I know them: and will fulfill them as nigh as God shall giue me grace.

Zelot. Doe ye breake none of them?

Ath. Wée breake them all of vs dayly and hourely: for there is no man which can kéepe them all.

Zelot. You breake some of them, and keepe other some. Ye keepe the greatest, doe ye not? and breake the least.

Ath. I kéepe the greatest, and therefore I hope God will beare with mée in the rest.

Zelot. Which doe ye take for to be the greatest, that ye are so cleere in?

Ath. I am no theefe, nor murtherer, nor traytour: I pay euery man his owne: I thinke this is Gods bidding.

Zelotes. Are there no greater then these?

Ath. I take him for an honest man which doth keepe these, and he that doth not I defie him.

Zelot. Euen so will I take you to bee, when I know that yee doe keepe them: But I maruell yee are so bold for to bid defiance to so many.

Ath. Doe not you defie them all and all other euill doers?

Zelot. If I should doe so, you & I should be together by the eares by and by.

Ath. Then belike yé count me to bee such an one: yé ought not to iudge.

Zelot. A man may know the tree by the fruites: but let this passe: I pray ye tell mee is not he whiche hath moe Gods then one, as euil as a murtherer?

Ath. I take him to bée worse.

Exod. 20. *Zelot.* Then the first commaundement is greater, then those which you named.

Ath. If a man think there is any God but one, he is very farre wyde.

Zelot. You

Zelot. You haue none other Gods but one then?

Ath. It were pittie of my life if I ſhould not be of that beliefe. If al the Commaundements were as eaſie to bee kept as this, we ſhould doe wel.

Zelot. Then yee neuer brake the firſt Commaundement.

Ath. Neuer in al my life: neither ſhal euer any make me to bée but of Gods beliefe: for they which beléeue there be many Gods are not of a right minde.

Zelot. Can you then keepe the greater and not the leſſe: I doe not doubt but if a man can keepe the firſt he can keepe all, for the firſt is as hard as any of the reſt, althogh ſuch skilful Clearks as you, count it to bee very eaſie.

Ath. Then it were an eaſie matter to kéepe them.

Zelot. What if I prooue vnto yee that you breake it, will you confeſſe your folly?

Ath. I will neuer be made beléeue that which I know is contrary.

Zelot. Let me aske ye this queſtiō: whether that man doth keepe this commandement, which thinketh there is but one god, and

and yet giueth that honour and woorſhip vnto other things, which he ſhould giue vnto him alone.

Ath. I did neuer put any truſt in images, nor I neuer thought they could doe me any good.

Zelot. I doe not ſpeake of that outward giuing away of Gods worſhip: but of an other which is inward in the mind.

Ath. I haue alwayes had God in my minde, and I truſt I haue neuer woorſhipped any beſides him.

Zelot. Is not that a mans God whiche he loueth beſt: and which he doth moſt delight in?

Ath. Loke what a man loueth beſt, & taketh moſt delight in, I thinke he maketh ỹ his god, bicauſe we ought to loue god beſt.

Zelot. Doe ye not thinke that the thing which a mā moſt ſetteth his mind vpō, and moſt ſeeketh after, is that which he moſt loueth?

Ath. I ſuppoſe euery man loketh after that which he moſt loueth.

Zelot. Then he which ſeeketh the world more then God, loueth the world more the God: and therfore in very deed maketh the world his God,

Ath. God

Ath. God forbid that any man should make more account of this worlde, then of God, I hope few doe so.

Zelot. You hope few doe so, but a man may easily proue that you doe so, and I am sure the most doe so.

Ath. I trust yée shal hardly proue it by mée, although yée iudge so euill of mée.

Zelot. Can a man seeke after God, or set his delight vpon God any other way, then by seeking after the knowledge and obedience of Gods wil which he hath reuealed in his word? or can a man loue God, and not loue his word?

Ath. Gods word is good, we must loue that al of vs & be ruled by it, for it doth tel vs nothing but that which is good.

Zelot. How slily you wind out of the matter, I aske one thing which yee doe not aunsweare: & that is whether a man can seeke God and not seeke him in his word.

Ath. Euery man cannot bée a Diuine, thée that bée vnlearned men are not for to meddle with so high matters.

Zelot. Now ye speake in your kinde, we be vnlearned men, we haue naught to do with God, we may not meddle with him.

Ath. You take all thinges wrong

yée

yée doe not heare me say so.

Zelot. Doe I take ye wrong, doe ye not say so? tel me is not God as high a matter as his word?

Ath. God is aboue all.

Zelot. Can we haue to doe with God, to serue him any way but by his word?

Ath. The word of GOD doth tel vs what wée are to doe.

Zelot. Then it followeth when yee say, we may not meddle with so high matters, that yee were euen as good for to say, wee haue nought to doe with GOD. We owe him no duety of obediēce, we need not care to know his wil: becauſe he is as high a matter as his word.

Ath. You put in a greate deale more then I sayde, and take mée still at the worſt.

Zelot. Nay you are so deepe in your speech, that yee vtter more in a word, then a man can wel lay open in an houres talke: Agayne, I take yee not at the worſt, for make the beſt of it you can, and it muſt needs follow that thoſe which care not for the word of God, care not for him, neyther doe they delight in him, or loue him which doe not delight in him nor loue his word.

Moreo-

Moreouer, howe shal a man take delight for to knowe the word, but it will cause him for to seeke to know it, that which is a mans Iewell, he will sometimes looke vpon it: but there are a number of yee which are indeed very Atheists, & set not a straw by the knowledge of Gods will: for let a man tell yee of any duety which ye should be taught out of the holy scriptures, by and by this is your aunsweare, those thinges are not for vs too meddle withall: it is not for vs too talke of such poyntes. But we are gone a great way from the beginning of this matter; which is, that where yee did affirme that yee loue God with all your heart, and that yee haue none other Gods besides him: Nowe the conclusion is procoued, that ye loue him as much as an olde shoe, and that indeede yee make the worlde your God because ye seeke most after that.

Ath. Yée doe not vse mée well in saying that I loue G O D no better then an olde shoe, I wouldе yée shouldе knowe I loue him as well as the best of yée all: though indéede I cannot say so much.

Zelot. Be not angry man, for it is but a small faulte, for a great sort moe do beare ye company, ye goe not alone. But because yee

ye make so great boſt. I pray ye tell mee this ye haue ſeruantes haue ye not?

Ath. I haue a poore houſhold.

Zelot What doe ye require of your ſeruant?

Ath. To obey my will, and to do that which I commaund him.

Zelot. What if hee care not ſo muche, as too knowe your will, but will ſaye: I will not meddle with ſo high matters, nothyng regarding to knowe your pleaſure: will yee ſay, hee loueth yee, or hee is a good ſeruant?

Ath. I cannot ſay that hee is a good ſeruant, for if he were, he wold not take skorne but be glad to heare my will.

Zelot. Ye ſay right, but why doe ye not conſider, that when God hath ſet down his will and you care not for to know it, that ye loue him as well and doe him as good ſeruice, as ſuch a ſeruant ſhould doe vnto you.

Ath. God helpe, if this which you ſay bee true.

Zelot. It is moſt true, not only that mē make the world their G O D, becauſe they ſeeke more after it then they doe after Gods kingdom, but alſo S. Paul calleth the Diuell the God of this world, as alſo in another

2. Cor. 4. 4.

place

place he sayeth, there is some whose God is their bellie. phil.3.19.

Ath. God forbid that any man shoulde take the diuell to bee God, or doe him such honour.

Zelot. They are no smal number which make him their God.

Ath. You may say so, but I could neuer come into that mans company yet whiche would not vtterly defie him.

Zelot. If I should professe great kindnes vnto you now, and in the meane time draw my dagger and breake your pate, would yee beleeue I were your friend?

Athe. I pray God keepe mee from such friendes: which giue good wordes and do euill deedes, I had rather they tolde me their hatred.

Zelot. Then ye answere that we must not looke what men say, but what they doe.

Ath. They had better not speake well, then to speake well and doe euill.

Zelot. Likewise I answere you that we must not looke to mens wordes when they defie the Diuell, but to their deeds by which they obey him and doe his will: for when they defie him in their wordes, they honour him for God in their workes.

Ath. If

Ath. If there be any such, I praye GOD amend them, for that is the worst which I wish them.

Zelot. I could like your prayer well if it were not only for a fashion, as yee vse many such like. For when it commeth to the tryal, you will easily bee founde among the number of such.

Ath. If yé thinke mée to bée such an one, yé iudge worse then euer any man did I thanke GOD I can bring many to testifie that I am an honest man, and alwayes haue bene, I wilbe founde as good as your selfe, though yo finde so greate faulte with other, as though yé were not like other men.

Zelot. I iudge nothing but that which is easie to see, in you and a number more, and which I canne, and will proue to your face.

Ath. Yé are a stranger vnto me, will yé iudge of mée, and knowe not what my workes are.

Zelot. Hee which cannot spie yee, hath but a simple vnderstanding: I pray yee tell mee, such as doe the workes and will of the Deuill, are they not of the Diuell. Saint
1. Iohn 3. 8. Iohn 1. Epistle 3. sayth, Hee that commit-

teth

teth euill is of the Diuell. Likewise our Sauiour Christ telleth the obstinate Iewes, Ioh. 8. Which boasted themselues to be the children of Abraham, and the children of God, that they were of their father the Diuell, and why, because they did his will. Euen so you take part with such as are euill and wicked, shal I aske ye a little question? Ioh. 8. 39. 44.

Ath. Yea, aske what you will, & iudge what ye like best, but I will answeare as wel as I can.

Zelot. Do ye not thinke that al Whoremaisters, Drunkards, Dicers, Raylers, Swearers, and such like, are the Diuels armye, as on the other side, such as profes Gods word and liue godly, are his souldiers, & do fight vnder his banner?

Ath. They are well holpen vp which serue such a maister.

Zelot. Why are you so vnwise then as to serue him: for all those which take part with those wicked men, & raile vpon those which are godly, doe fight vnder the same standerd, and seeke to vphold the kingdome of the Diuell, labouring for to ouerthrow the Gospel, and to banish Gods word.

Ath. They are worthy to haue their eares cut from their head, which rayle vpon

honest men or seeke to slaunder them.

Zelot. This is a common thing among all the pack of ye, if there be any man which hath a care to know God, and seeketh after his word, & wil not cõsit those beastly sins which ouerflow in al places, then you which cannot abide to haue Gods word set forth, deuise a number of lies and slanders against them, calling them puritanes, rascals & many such like. On the contrary part, let a man be a common drunkard, a Dicer, and ignorãt beast which hath no knowledge of god, a wretched worldling, or any kind of such person: he is an honest man: for they bee those whom you would haue a man lose his eares for: hee is nowe counted the honest man which liueth as the most doe.

Ath. There bee a number goe so farre they cannot tel what they may do: they will not doe as their honest neighbours doe, they wilbe wiser then their betters: what should they meddle with Gods woorde, it maketh them busie in checking euery man. It was neuer merry since mẽ vnlearned haue medled with the scriptures.

Zelot. I maruel how far you would go if a man should followe ye: ye are like a puddle, which the more a man stirreth it, the more filthy mud ariseth: ye are like a sinke, where the

the more a mā ſtirreth the more is the ſtink.

Ath. What meane yee by that?

Zelot. I mean that your heart is ful of foule ſtinking & rottē matter, which floweth out at your mouth. I confeſſe that thoſe men be not to be allowed which meddle with that, which they ſhoulde not: but I know whom you meane, when ye ſay they goe ſo far, that they know not what they may do: ye ſpeake of them which ſeeke to know God, whom ye thinke to be halfe madd.

Ath. There be ſome of them which are not book learned, what ſhould they do otherwiſe thē their fathers before them: I knew ſome of their fathers, honeſt men, and never troubled themſelues that way.

Zelot. I did know your mind wel inough: for al your ſpite is againſt thoſe which learn out of Gods word to know their duetie towards the Lord: & becauſe as S. Peter ſayth, they do not run with ye to the ſame exces of riot, ye think it ſtrāge & blaſphemy. Againe, ye cannot abide to be admoniſhed, when ye cōmit any naughty thing Ye know not that God hath appointed his worde for al ſortes of men to be inſtructed in it throughly, for the holy Apoſtles exhort enery where vntō great knowledge in the word. 1 pet. 4.

Againe ye know not that which the Lord

cõmandeth in ſundry places, that we ſhould admoniſh, and reproue one another: if any do amiſſe: & not as you blind obſtinate mẽ, which when a man doth after a godly manner admoniſhe yee: hee is by and by a buſie medler, what hath he to doe, he ſhal not anſwere for you. And becauſe ye may not doe what lewdnes yee liſt, vncontrolled, ye ſay it was neuer merry ſince euery mã might read the ſcriptures. It is maruellous that men ſhould ſo become beaſts, without all vnderſtanding.

Ath. It woulde not gréue me to be reproued by thoſe which are learned, but now euery Jacke wilbe medling.

Zelot. If you be reproued iuſtly by Gods word, then is it God which doth reproue, ye are not to looke vpon the man. But when yee call them Iackes, and giue them other reproches, it is becauſe yee are blinde, and can diſcerne nothing but that whiche is of this worlde. For if yee could ſee, how great glory the pooreſt true Chriſtian is called vnto, to be the child of God, ye would not reuile thoſe whom God honoureth.

Ath. They will be medling in ſmall matters, if it were for great faults it were ſomewhat, but a man may not be merry nowe.

Zelot Be-

Zelot. Beyng vtterly blynde, and voyde of grace, yee count thoſe ſinnes which are fowle and groſſe, for to bee ſmal: ſwearing, rayling, talking in your filthy ribaldry, ſinging fowle and beaſtly ſonges, theſe & ſuch like are your pety faultes; this is your mirth which muſt not be hindred: For it is death to yee to haue any godlineſſe ſpoken of, if it be, ye cannot be merrie: This Dungel mirth is that which men complaine of to be moleſted, and ſay it was happy in old time, when mē were not reproued for ſuch things, now there be ſo many ſcripture men, that a man cannot tel what to ſay, or what to doe.

Ath. There are none of yée all as holie yée woulde ſéeme for to bée, but haue faultes: yée ſée not your owne, but other mens.

Zelot. Hee which doth not repent and correct his own vicious nature, and ſtriue to obey God, is no good reproouer of others: But when yee ſay, men ſeeme to be holy and giue it as a matter of reproch, therein ye goe almoſt beyond the Diuel himſelfe: for you ſee that I gaineſay yee, or els yee woulde not inure it, but yee would euen powre out your ſtinking & rotten poyſon like blaſphemous and venemous beaſts: ye would ſpeake after

this manner you that are so full of the spirit, you that are Saintes and such like. What are you Diuels.are ye of the flesh? no doubt ye are,vntil god couert ye.But we may see how diuellishly men are become wicked: when a man cānot make any appearāce to bee godly and holy,but it is reproched as though it were a shameful thing to be led by the spirit. For otherwise why doe they so obiect an honest thing to liue after the flesh, a shamefull matter to be guided by the spirite.

Ath. God helpe vs if none be good but such, I hope honest and quiet men shalbe saued as well as they, although they cannot talke so well, nor runne not to heare Sermons.

Zelot. Nay you would haue others in better case then they, for you iudge them that are zealous in the Gospel & would faineſt of al other please God,to bee the woorst men: and the more careful a man is to be holy to the Lord,the more he is disdayned and misliked.Which doth euidently shewe that such as you are led by the spirit of the Diuel. Yee lead me so from one matter to another, that we are gone from some thing which ye vttered.I remember yee saidye put your whole trust in God.

Ath. I said so, & so I say still: though I haue no learning, yet I trust I beleeue as wel as any scripture man of them all.

Zelot. Ye bragge very boldly, I pray yee tel me this, are ye sure ye shalbe saued?

Ath. No, nor you neither, nor the best of yee all, wee must commit that to God.

Zelot. What is it that yee put all your whole trust in him for? Is it not this, that GOD hath promised vnto yee eternal life, and that ye beleue he wil performe his promise?

Ath. That he doth loue me, and giueth mee all thinges.

Zelot. Are ye not sure that he doth loue yee?

Ath. I hope he doth loue me: but I am not sure.

Zelot. Doth not the scripture saye, that whosoeuer doth trust in him shalbe saued?

Ath. God saith so indeede, and I beleeue it is so.

Zelot. You knowe doe yee not, that ye put your whole trust and beliefe in him?

Ath. I knowe I doe: and I hope I shall alwayes doe.

Zelot. If God cannot lie, when he saith all that trust in him shalbee saued, and you know that yee put your whole trust in him. Wherefore doe yee not then knowe that ye shalbe saued?

Ath. What which God sayth, is true, for he cannot lie: I put my trust in none but in him: I hope to bee saued, what would yee haue more? I will beleeue neuer a one of them all when they saye they knowe they shalbe saued: I thinke they would make themselues Gods. Tit. 1.2.

Zelot. Naye such as you make your selues Gods, when yee ioyne thinges so contrary together & can make them agree: fire and water may lodge together in one bedd, at your inne, and agree well together: For they are no more contrary then that which yee affirme, when yee say God hath promised that all which beleeue in him shalbee saued, you are sure yee beleeue in him, and that ye put al your whole trust in him, & yet yee cannot tell whether yee shalbee saued. But I cannot greately maruell at this, for yee know as well what fayth is, as doeth a Goose.

Ath. I trust I knowe, and I meane well, God knoweth my meaning howsoeuer

you take mée.

Zelot. Let mee aske yee this queſtion, when a man prayeth, if hee doe not beleeue that whiche hee ſayeth, doeth hee well?

Ath. Wée muſt beléeue that which wée ſpeake when wée prayé, or els it is nothing worth.

Zelot. When Chriſte teacheth vs too praye, and to call GOD our Father: ought we not for to know that he is our Father?

Ath. Wée ought for to knowe that whiche GOD teacheth vs and to beléeue the ſame.

Zelot. Muſt we not beleeue it without doubting or wauering, as S. Iames ſaith, hee that doubteth is like vnto a waue of the Sea toſſed with the winde, neither let that man thinke that he ſhal receiue any thing?

Ath. Wée muſt not doubt for hée that doubteth is in a wrong beléefe, wée muſt put all our truſt in God.

Zelot. Then when ye cal GOD Father, ye beleeue that ſurely which ye ſpeak, thē are ye ſure that he loueth ye, for a Father doeth loue his child, euen men which are euil doe giue good giftes vnto their children when they Matth. 7. 11. Luk. 11. 13.

they aske, becauſe they loue them, muche more, the heauenly father which is perfectly good, doth loue his children, that is thoſe which beleeue in him: then I reaſon in this wiſe, he that beleeueth ſurely that GOD is his father, hee is ſure that God loueth him: he that is ſure God loueth him is ſure of eternall life: therefore al thoſe which pray aright, are ſure they ſhalbe ſaued.

Ath. I pray GOD we may cal vpon him.

Zelot. Tel me further what yee thinke, was not Abraham ſure he ſhould bee ſaued, likewiſe Dauid, Paule, and others?

Ath. Euerye man cannot bee like thoſe. Can you ſay yée are like vnto Abraham?

Zelot. Doth not the Scripture ſay, that Abraham is the father of the faithfull, and that thoſe are the Children of God whiche walke in the ſteppes of the faithfull Abraham? I confeſſe indeede that euery one cannot attayne to ſo great a meaſure of fayth as thoſe had: but yet wee muſt come to the ſame fayth, becauſe we haue the ſame God, the ſame couenant and promiſes, the ſame ſpirite is giuen vnto vs which beleeue. Saynt

Paule

Paule in the 4. chap. to the Ephesians sayth, Eph. 4. 5.
there is one God, one faith, one baptisme. If there be but one, then ours must bee the same that theirs was.

Ath. Yea, but for al that it is presumption for men to say, they know they shalbe saued.

Zelot. I see that popish dung doth stick stil between your teeth, whē they teach men that it is presumption to be out of doubt.

Ath. What tell yē mē of the Pope, I care not for him, I would both hee and his Dung, were buried in the Dunghill.

Zelot. I know there be many which care not for the Pope, but yet beleeue muche of his doctrine: they bee those which wee call Atheists, of no religion, but looke whatsoeuer any prince doth set foorth, that they will professe.

Ath. I thinke that is good, ought not wē for to obey our Princes, and would yē haue vs to take vpon vs for to bee wyser then they and their Counsellers?

Zelot. I doe knowe yee were an Atheist, setting vp men in the place of God,

God: worse then a Turke.

Ath. Wherefore doe yee say so?

Zelot. Tell me this, are wee for to obey men if they command that which is contrary to that which God commandeth?

Ath. I think not so.

Zelot. Is there any mo then one truth, or one religion, which is the right, and that which God commaundeth?

Ath. There can be but one truth, that is certayne.

Zelot. Then when one Prince commaundeth one religion, another ariseth afterward and commandeth the contrarye: Wil ye without difference obey them both? is not this for to deny God? is not this for to be worse then a Turke?

Ath. I am sure yée will not denie, but that we must obey.

Zelot. Hee which doth disobey the Prince, doth disobey GOD, vnto his damnation, where the Prince setteth foorth and mainteyneth Gods worde. But if there be a Prince which maketh lawes against the lawes of God, we must obey GOD rather then men. But there are many as I sayd before, which in any Princes dayes wil speake thus, if religion should turne (say they) as

God

God forbid it ſhould, but if it doe, it is our partes to bee obedient. Are not theſe Athieſts, haue they not denied God, when they ſet men in his place? And looke no higher but what men commaunde. But yee haue drawne me away againe from the matter we were in hand with, where ye ſaid it is preſumption for a man to ſay he knoweth he ſhalbe ſaued: I may aske ye a queſtion I know ye will anſwere very boldly.

Ath. I knowe no cauſe why I ſhould not anſwere boldly.

Zelot. Ye ſay true, for blind bayarde is the boldeſt horſe in the cart, although he be almoſt drowned in one ſlow yet he will not ſtick at another: he wil through when al the reſt will ſtraine curteſie. But let vs come to the matter: whether is it greater preſumption for to beleeue that God it true, or for to doubt of the certeintie of his promiſe? & whether doth that man honour GOD moſt which giueth credit to his word, or he which doubteth whether he will perfourme the ſame?

Ath. It muſt needs be graunted that he which beleeueth God of his word, doth well, and he that doth not doeth euill.

Zelet. Ye

Zelot. You say true, for if a Prince make an offer vnto some man whō he fauoureth, and he shoulde make answeare, I doubt of it, I scarce beleue the performance of your promise: would not the Prince thinke him selfe greatly dishonoured to haue it doubted whether he be a mā of his word. If he should sweare for the performāce of his promise, & the party not trust him, he would neuer put that vp, or beare such an iniury. Thē it must needs follow that whē God hath boūd him selfe both by promise & by oth, as it is saide Heb. cap. 6. ver. 17. How great presūption is it not for to beleeue him? it is all one as to thinke God may lie, or that he may bee forsworne, which is horrible blasphemie.

Ath. **I graunt this is true, if God should tel any man that he should be saued, if he did not then beleeue him. But where is that man whiche can say God euer tolde him so? Doth he tell any one man so?**

Zelot. Yea that he doth, for that which he sendeth vnto al in general, he sēdeth vnto euery one in particular: for is it not alone, if a mā be condemned for treason to haue his pardō sent him being but one mā alone, or hauing a great sort mo cōdēned vnto death with him, a general pardō is sent for thē all?

Ath. That

Ath. That is al one, for he hath his part in it.

Zelot. Euen so is it betweene God and vs, we were al condéned, hee hath sent a generall pardó to as many as beleeue the same, that whosoeuer trusteth in Christ hee shalbe saued. God therefore hath tolde some men, that is such as beleue, that they shalbe saued, and such as doubt of his promise & his oth, they shalbe dãned. Therefore it is al one in those which beleue, as if he had sent a particular message vnto them.

Ath. I neuer heard so much in all my life before.

Zelot. I beleeue so. For S. R. can no great skil in this geare: he can whip ouer a newe payre of cardes nembly, and tyrle a dye. But he shoulde be the messenger of the Lorde of hostes, euen as the Prophete sayeth, his lips should keepe knowledge, and men shoulde enquire at his mouth, hee shoulde open all the Counsel of God vnto the people, & not let them run headlong as they doe vnto destruction. He shoulde instruct them in al the doctrine of fayth, and repentance, and so guyde them in the feare of God.

Ath. All men cannot do alike, we must accept their good will, euery man cannot be a Preacher.

Zelot. Because yee care not for seeking

king after eternall life, yee are content to ac-cept of nothing: and because yee loue your lusts, and hate to be refourmed, yee abhorre the vse of preaching: and as a poore man as ye are, would ye not for xl. shillings ye had a Preacher among you.

Ath. Yée euer take me at the worst, I allowe preaching, it is good now and then, but some can keepe no measure nor tel when they haue done: Againe they bée ouer whot and seuere, and preache damnation to the people: Likewise they meddle with suche matters as they neede not as Election and Predestination, what shoulde suche matters bée spoken of among the people, they make men woorse.

Zelot. I thinke the Diuell is the cunningest schoolemaster in the worlde. Other schoolemaisters cannot bring grosse heads & dullards to any passe, but content themselues with the finer wits, for to trayne them vp in learning: but a man can almost lyght vppon none of his schollers, be they neuer such blockheads, but they haue their lesson at their fingers endes.

Ath. I thanke yee Sir for your good woorde: But I neuer learned it of the Diuell, nor neuer was any of his schollers: I trust

truth I haue as litle to doe with him as you or any other.

Zelot. Where did yee learne it then, if not of the Diuell?

Ath. I haue heard honest men speake it, and some Preachers preach it.

Zelot. Then I perceiue ye learned it not of the Diuell himselfe, but at the mouth of some of his Vshers.

Ath. Wherefore doe yee call them the Diuelles Vshers? they haue skill in the worde of God, and ought to knowe what they say.

Zelot. I cal them so because they teach the preceptes of the Diuell. And although they haue some knowledge in the word, yet they neuer learned these thinges which you speake out of the worde.

Ath. Did the Diuel teach them because they haue it not in Gods worde?

Zelot. It is the doctrine of the Diuell, because it is against Gods worde. For God neuer teacheth men those thinges which are contrary to the doctrine which hee hath set downe in his worde.

Ath. I thinke yee will hardely proue these thinges for too be agaynst Gods worde.

Zelot. I woulde you coulde as easily proue your selfe to be a good man: for then we should soone agree.

Ath. You are not for to iudge of mée no more then I am for to iudge of you: but there be many nowe a daies which wil take vppon them for to iudge men: they doe not learne that out of Gods woorde I am sure.

Zelot. If I see a man drunken, or heare him sweare or raile and such like, and say, he is a naughtye man, doe I iudge: shall I account him a good man, when I see hee is naughte?

Ath. When a man doth see those naughty vices, hee may boldely say that such men are naught.

Zelot. In like manner when a man heareth one which holdeth euill and abhominable opinions against the truth, he may as boldely say hee is naught: because they haue giuen iudgement of them selues, and haue shewed what they are. Nay they bee suche as you which take vppon yee for to iudge: for let a mā be more careful thē your selues for to serue God: & by & by you will enter into the secrets of his hart, which god only do know, and yee will not sticke for to pro-

pronounce that he is an hypocrite. In the meanie time, let a man tell you that yee are wicked, when he doth see your wickednesse, yee answere, yee ought not to iudge: but I wil come for to proue that the things which ye spake against preaching, are very diuelish and wicked. Ye saide thus, I allowe preaching it is good nowe and then, but some can kepe no measure, nor will neuer haue done.

Ath. I sayd so in deede: I will not deny my word, I thinke so still, for a man may haue ouermuch of any thing, and ynough is as good as a feast.

Zelot. A very little is ynough for you, if the Preacher doe passe his houre but a little, your buttokes beginne for to ake, and yee wishe in your hearte that the Pulpit woulde fall.

Ath. Ye may gesse twise before ye gesse right.

Zelot. Nay I canne gesse somewhat neere in suche a man as yee are: but I praye yee did yee neuer sitte at Candes all night?

Ath. Yes that I haue, and thought it but a short night too.

Zelot. The cause why yee thinke an

houre so long at a Sermon, & a whole night so short at Cardes, is that yee delight in the one and care not for the other: the carding is ioined with much sinne and seruice of the Diuell, the other is for to bring vs vnto the knowledge and feare of God: Marke nowe howe much by your own confession ye loue the Diuell more then GOD? for hym doe yee loue most, whome yee delight to serue most.

Ath. Can wee not serue God without so much preaching? I see they are neuer the better which run most after sermons, they talke much, but I would haue them leaue talking and fall to doyng, wee see no doyng but men are still euen as euil as before.

Zelot. Can your seruaunt serue you vnlesse he know your will?

Ath. No that he cannot.

Zelot. No more can you serue GOD without the knowledge of his will, and as for the rest of your speech, when ye crie out against preaching of Gods worde, that it maketh men neuer the better, and ye would haue them leaue talking, and fal to doing: I confesse there be a number which are counterfeite professors which liue not according

to

to the Gospel, & most commonly they bee such, as haue but a litle smacke of the Gospel, & yet thinke they know much, because they want the meanes, hauing the worde either seldome or loosely preached. But I wil confute your vanitie, another way in this poynt, tell me, are not these your sayinges? where the worde is sincerely preached, if any seeke to frame their liues after the same, when they doe eyther by woorde reprooue your euil wayes, or by deed refuse your lewd maners: These men are full of the Spirite, these are precise fellowes, these are holie Sayntes, these thinke themselues Gods fellowes; these thinke themselues better then all other men.

Ath. We say so indeede, there is good cause why.

Zelot. Then I pray ye tell me how these two things can hang together, when ye say there is no amendment of life, and yet yee complayne that they be ouer ful of the spirite, ouer precise, & such like. May not euery man see, that yee pronounce things directly contrary the one to the other? that there is no amendment, and yet in effect ye say, they amend ouer fast.

Ath. We doe not say that any bee a-

mens ouer fast.

Zelot. When ye say they are ouer holy, & what should men bee so curious and full of the spirite, what is this but to say, that they amend ouer fast? Is not this to amend, when men by due instruction out of Gods worde come to repentaunce of their former vices? and haue a care to keepe themselues from the spottes of the rotten flesh and filthie worlde. Doe not you and suche as you are after a sort blaspheme, when yee reproche men with the spirite? Is it a shame for a man nowe adayes for to hauke anye thing to doe with the spirite of GOD? While a man doth walke after the flesh in the lustes of vncleanneſſe, hee is an honeſt man: But ſo ſoone as he is indued with any grace, ye woonder at him as crowes do at an owle, ye are ready to floute & mocke him out of his skinne. And as if the spirite of God were a spirite of dishonour and shame, yee mocke men with him. We may woonder at the long patience of GOD, which hath thus many yeeres ſuffered himſelfe to bee dishonoured, his spirit reuiled, his word deſpiſed, & hath not byn reuenged: but no doubt the longer he hath taried, the heauier wil the stroke be.

Ach, Syr, we are men, what should they

make

make themselues more holy then they be?

Zelot. If ye meane one way yee say right, for it is a naughty vice for men to seeme to be holy when they are not, or to seeme to be more holy then they be: but if yee meane another way (as I thinke ye do) that because men are sinfull by nature, why should they seeke for to be better, then doe ye speake very wickedly. For God calleth men to repentance, to turne from their euill wayes: God guideth his seruants at al times with his spirite, therefore S. Paule saith Rom. 8. There is no condemnation nowe to those which are in Christ Iesus, which walke not after the flesh, but after the spirite. And againe in the same chapter, as many as are led by the spirite of God, are the sonnes of God. He saith that if we liue after the flesh, we shall dye: in other places he doth shewe, which are the works of the spirite, & which are the workes of the flesh: And you like blasphemous wretches allow those which walke after the flesh, and condemne those which are led by the spirit.

Ath. Are none indued with Gods spirite, but suche as runne to heare preaching?

Zelot. Whosoeuer hath the spirite

of GOD, cannot but delight in the worde of God, which the same spirit hath vttered: The Lorde saith he which is of God, heareth Gods worde. The happie man is he (as we haue in the 1. Psalm) which hath his delight in the law of the Lord, and which doth meditate in the same day and night. We haue in the Psalm. 112. Blessed is the man whiche feareth the Lorde, he hath greate delight in his commaundements.

Iohn 8. 47.

Moreouer, the spirite of GOD doth not guyde men without the worde. And therefore it is sayde Psalm. 119. Thy word is a lanterne vnto my feete, and a light vnto my pathes. S. Pet. saith, 1. Epist. 1. Hee hath begotten vs againe not of mortal but of immortal seed, which hee affirmeth to be the worde of God that indureth for euer. Likewise S. Iames sayth cap. 1. of his owne good wil begat he vs, by the word of truth. Seeyng therfore that the holy Ghost doeth get men by the word, it followeth that al those which set light by the worde, are led, not with the spirite of God, but with the spirite of the Diuell, I might alleadge a number of Testimonies of Scripture to proue that suche as you which make so smal accompt of the sacred word of God, as there bee a number,

1. Pet. 1. 23.

Yea

yea the greateſt number which doe not ſet ſo much by it as they doe by an olde ſhoe, are deſpicers of God, woorſe then bruite beaſtes.

Ath. Cannot men be lead by Gods ſpirite and ſerue God, vnleſſe they knowe the Scriptures: GOD forbidde that all thoſe ſhoulde bee awaye which are not learned: it not ynough for plaine countrie men, plowe men, taylours, and ſuche other, for to haue their ten commaundementes, the Lordes prayer, and the beliefe: I thinke theſe may ſuffice vs, what ſhoulde wee meddle further? I know men which are no ſcripture men whiche ſerue GOD as well as the beſt of them all. Will yee condemne ſuch?

Zelot. I ſayde before that men cannot be lead by Gods ſpirite, and refuſe to know the Scriptures: Neyther can they truely ſerue him vntil ſuch time as they know how for to ſerue him: for God teacheth how he wil bee ſerued, and hee teacheth only in his word: His wil is that we ſhal learne to know him by his word: And therefore he hath appointed the Miniſtry of the worde to continue for euer in his Churche, that by it men may be buylt vp in Chriſt, as yee may reade

Ephe.

2 Thm 4.2 Ephe: 4. For this cause S. Paule exhorteth Timothy to be instant in teaching in season & out of season: he trauelled himselfe night and day, he maketh a very feruent prayer to GOD continually for the Colloſſians, that they might be fulfilled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisedome and ſpirituall vnderſtanding. Colloſ. ver. 9. For this cause he exhorteth the Christians to bee children in malice, but not to be children in vnderſtanding. The holy Ghoſt doth sharply reproue the Hebrewes as we may see, in the later end of the 5. chap. of that Epiſtle: because they were yet children to be taught, when for the time they ſhould haue byn teachers. Againe there is a notable ſentence in the beginning of the ſecond chap. of the Prouerbs, where a man may plainely prooue, that none can come to the feare of God, but ſuche as doe earneſtly endeuour for to knowe God. The woordes be these. My ſonne if thou receiue my words, and hide my commaundements with thee, to incline thine eares to wisedome, and to bow thy heart to vnderſtanding: if thou call for vnderſtanding, and vtter thy voyce for knowledge: if thou seeke her as ſiluer, and digge for her as for hidde treaſures: Then ſhalt thou vnderſtand the

feare

feare of the Lord and find the knowledge of God. If a man doe not receiue the word and commandements of GOD vttered by his Ministers, if hee doe not keepe and lay them vp, if he doe not cry and call vpon God for vnderstanding, if hee doe not incline his eares and bend his heart thereto, if he doe not searche and digge after her as men doe for treasures: he shall not come to the knowledge of the feare of God.

Ath. All men cannot come to these things which you speake of.

Zelot. All men which will please God must come thus farre, that they can say with the Prophet Dauid in the 119. Psalme, I haue hidden thy woord in my heart, that I might not sinne against thee: Also in the same place where he hath asked the question, Wherwithall a young man shall cleanse his wayes, he answereth by taking heed thereto according to thy woorde: wherby it is most euident, that all those are vnpure in their wayes, and sinne grieuously against GOD, which haue not layd vp his word in their heartes, nor cleansed their wayes by the same.

But

But let vs come to some other of your sayings, which I am grieued for to heare.

Ath. Yée néede not to bee greeued, for I doe not hurt yée.

Zelot. I cannot but bee greeued to see your grosse and palpable blindnesse: and I am the more grieued when I remember that many which are otherwise very wise men vse much your doltish sayinges, and thinke they speake very wisely. They say what should vnlearned men meddle further then to saye their ten commandements, the Lords prayer, and the Articles of the faith. And you are of the same minde.

Ath. I trust to doe as wel with these, as other with all their learning.

Zelot. Doe yee thinke that yee shal doe well euen because ye can say them although yee doe not vnderstand them.

Ath. Nay if a man say them, and doe not vnderstand them, hée is little the better. I know not why I should not vnderstande them, so long as GOD hath giuen mée my fiue wittes: I am no childe, nor I am no foole.

Zelot. Indeede he that hath one good wit, is no foole, much lesse are you which haue fiue: you must needes know all and more,

more. For I thinke yee meane, that yee are able by reason to vnderstand those thinges.

Ath. I trust I vnderstand by that reason which God hath giuen me, so much as is sufficient: I can tell when I doe well, and I can tell when I doe euill.

Zelot. I perceiue you are a Free will man, one of those which thinke by naturall vnderstanding too conceiue the mysteries of God: And yee doe indeede vnderstand so much as is sufficient: not for to saue yee, but as S. Paule sayth Rom 1. to make yee without excuse: & so to condemne ye. You know some sinnes: and likewise yee can tell some things which are good, but yee can neuer tell any thing which yee haue done that is good.

Ath. I trust GOD will be more fauourable then you are: and that he will not forget the good deeds which I haue done.

Zelot. A verie little boxe I warrant you will holde all your deedes, if yee haue no moe olde deedes then yee haue good deedes.

Ath. Are not these good deedes, when a man doth giue to the poore, and is readye to doe his neighbour a good turne? when a man doeth

doth liue honestly, serue God, and thinke no man any harme.

Zelot. Now ye speake of cost: now ye are hit into your right vaine againe, euen where ye would be, to boast of those things which ye haue not: for none of all these or such like are good in you, because they doe not proceede of fayth: for S. Paul saith Rom. 14. ver. 23. Whatsoeuer is not of faith is sinne.

Ath. How can ye proue that mine are not of fayth?

Zelot. Faith is by hearing, and hearing by the word. Rom. 10. 17. where a man despiseth the word, there can be no fayth: because faith is grounded vpon the word, and doth not beleeue things contrary vnto the word. Moreouer, they bee not your fiue wits, (as you terme them) which can make ye able for to vnderstande the mysteries of Gods word. For they cannot be vnderstood as S. Paule teacheth, 1. Corinth. 2. 11. Vnlesse God reueale them by his spirite: for euen the wicked which seeme to knowe them, do not know the aright. But let vs come for to see how well ye do vnderstand the x. cõmandements. Doe ye not looke to come to heauen, by doing of them?

Ath. I doe them as nigh as God will

giue

gine me grace, I trust God will not require more at my hands the I am able for to do: I am as he made me, if he had made mee able for to do better, I should doe more.

Zelot. Now ye are in a deepe peece of diuinitie: ye thinke this is so equall which ye vtter now, that all the Doctors in the world are not able for to controull ye. Ye say ye do what ye can, more God cannot require at your handes? you meane as if one shoulde make this comparison: a father cānot require nomore of his child then his strength wil serue, a prince can command his subiect no impossible thing: if a father should whip his child for not doing that which he is not able, it were cruelty: if a prince shoulde put a subiect to death for not doing his cōmandemēt in a matter vnpossible, it were tyranny: the father will say, My child did his good will. I can aske no more: The prince will say he hath done that which a man might, and further I can not require. Likewise you thinke GOD shoulde deale straightly with ye, if he should condemne ye for breaking the Lawe, which ye are not able to obserue: and that he cannot looke for more at your handes then hee hath made yee able

able to performe.

Ath. I meane so indeede, flesh is fraile, we can not doe all things.

Zelot. I pray yee tell mee, do yee thinke any shall goe to hell and be damned?

Ath. The Scripture sayth there shall, doth it not?

Zelot. Wherefore doe yee thinke they shalbe damned?

Ath. For breaking Gods commaundements.

Zelot. Are they able for to keepe them?

Ath. No man is able for to keepe them.

Zelot. Shall they then bee damned for euer in hell fire, for breaking those Lawes which they were not able to keepe?

Ath. Not if they had done their good will: For then they coulde not bee blamed.

Zelot. Howe the Diuell hath muffled you to keepe yee from seeyng the daunger of eternall damnation which yee are in? haue yee neuer heard that which GOD sayth by Moses, which S. Paule cyteth in the 3. chap. to the Galath. Curfed is euery one which abydeth not in all thinges which are writ-

ten in the booke of the law for to do them: by which yee may see that GOD with his owne mouth doth lay his curse, which is damnation vppon euery one which doeth breake neuer so little of the lawe.

Ath. GOD is mercifull, hee is not so seuere as you woulde make him for to bee.

Zelot. Doe yee not thinke that he is a iust and a true God?

Ath. I must needes thinke so.

Zelot. Do ye thinke that when he hath vttered his iustice, that hee can by his mercy go from it, and so be founde vntrue? Nay there be many of yee which in all things cry God is mercifull, God is mercifull, which neuer consider with what conditions God hath promised mercy, neither howe it may stand with his iustice and trueth: yee thinke God offereth mercy without exception.

Ath. If God be not mercifull, we are but in euill case.

Zelot. He is a most merciful and gratious God, but yet not vnto any, but such as he hath promised mercy. How many thousands there be, which are caried headlong to hell with this error, which not knowyng the iustice and truth of GOD. doe blesse

them ſelues where God hath accurſed the. For theſe thinges which you haue now vttered, are euen of the principal reaſons which Satan doth ſeduce men withall, & holde the from the truth. They thinke thus, I do what I can, God hath made me able to doe no better, god is merciful, they know not this, that God made vs able in our firſt creation to keepe and obey his will wholly, and that although we can now keep no part of it, yet he may iuſtly accurſe & condemne vs vnto eternall fire, for transgreſſing any part of it: yee are not as he made yee, and therefore ye deceiue your ſelfe when yee thinke that hee requireth no more at your hands, then yee are nowe able for to doe. Yee deceyue your ſelfe, when yee thinke that God can be mercifull vnto yee and you liue without repentance.

Ath. You would make a man diſpayre, if ye would put him out of hope in the mercie of God.

Zelot. I would not bring yee out of hope in the mercy of GOD, but I would bring yee out of your vayne hope, which is not that which will ſaue yee, but doth harden and blind yee vnto damnation.

Ath. Yee

Ah howe can a mans hope and fayth in GOD, harden and blynde him vnto damnation: howe a darts there is nothing among many of yée but damnation, damnation. It is wel that God hath not giuen you power for to condemne men.

Zelor. If it were a true fayth, it must needes saue them, but being a faith which is blynde, it blyndeth those which haue it, and hardneth them in their sinnes, and keepeth them from the seeking after the knowledge of Gods will, and stayeth them from returning home vnto God by true repentaunce, becauſe it breadeth this in the hearts of mẽ to thinke and to say, we are wel ynough, wee trust in Gods mercy, wee beleeue as well as the best of them all: when as if they were ridde out of this notable snare of the Diuel, and brought for to see the wrath of GOD bent against them, they would then be glad with feare and trembling to seeke after the Lorde in his worde, and to bee afrayde to committe those thinges which might displeaſe him. Where as nowe a man may crye vntill hee rende his thoate a gaynst their contempt of the Lordes word, and agaynst their fowle sinnes, before

hee can mooue them at all: and why because the Diuel hath gotten thē within this fortresse; God is mercifull, God is mercifull. And for your other fooliſh words, that there is nowe nothing but damnation damnatiō: Doe ye thinke that men are euer the sooner cast into damnation becauſe they are tolde of the great daunger thereof.

Ath. I pray yee let mee see what good can come thereof.

Zelot. If I shoulde meete ye by the way and perceiue that yee were goyng into the way where ye should lyght among theeues, which would murther ye: which were moſt profitable for you, if I should tell ye, thus, ye be well, ye be wel, or to shew ye that ye be in daunger of your life, if ye passe that way?

Ath. That were a wicked part for to let a man goe where hee shoulde loſe his life and not for to tell him.

Zelot. Wherefore doe yee not see then that thoſe which do shew ye the daunger of damnation doe it for your profit, as wel as they which teach yee to auoyde some outward dāger, If a man tell yee thus, goe not that way, ye will be robbed, ye wil be killed, doth it follow that he will robbe or kill yee? becauſe ye say, men now vtter damnation,

and

and that it is well they haue not power to condemne men. And know this for certeinty, that if God in his worde doth threaten damnation, & the Preacher doe not shew it to the people, and teach them how to auoid the same, their blood shalbe required at his hand. But let vs come backe agayne to the former matter to see how well ye vnderstād your x. commaundements. I would know this of yee, whether it bee good for men to knowe the lawe, seeyng it doth nothing but curse & condemne vs: if there were no law, there could be no sinne. I speake both of the law of nature, and of the law written, and if there were no sinne, there could be no condemnation: For this cause the law is called the mynistry of death and condemnation, & it is called the letter which killeth, 2. Cor. 3. 6 Seing it doth worke all this, what profit can it bring for to knowe it, or why should it be preached?

Ath. I pray yée tell me you, for I am vnlearned, and you are learned. If it bée as you say, I thinke it were good not to preache it: if it doe condemne vs.

Zelot What a shame is it that a man of your age should haue so litle skill, as not to know to what purpose the law serueth. It is a

token ye vnderstand your x. commaundements well. I will tell ye, when a man knoweth the law, it doth bring him to see that he is altogether corrupted with sinne, both in body and soule, that he is vnder Gods heauie indignation and curse: and that in himselfe there is no helpe at all, it casteth him into feare and terror of Gods iudgementes, and so inforceth him to seeke for remedy in Christ. Whom before he did not greatly seek after. For looke how a man which doth not thinke himselfe sicke nor in daunger of sickenesse careth not for a Phisition: so he which doth not know his damnable estate by the lawe, careth not for Christ: This is the cause why Christ saith: The whole need not the Phisition, but the sicke, I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentaunce. Therefore to such as haue wounded consciences, the Gospel is sweete and comfortable: and Christ in the later end of the eleuenth chapter of S. Mathew, calleth such vnto him, saying: Come vnto me all ye which trauell and be heauie laden, and I will refresh ye. But such as haue no feeling of their sinnes, or which are blinded and hardened, ye shall perceiue smal ioy & delight in them for to heare the word preached: they had rather

ther be at Bearebayting.

Ath. Ye say well, I would I could remember your wordes.

Zelot. There be many which will seeme to be desirous for to learne, but a man shall see, they continue euen as careleſſe as before: But I wil goe on with this matter. The Scripture saieth, that a sorowfull spirite is a sacrifice to God: & that God doth not despise the humble and contrite heart: But men are afrayd to be brought to the knowledge and feeling of their sinnes for feare as they say, least they shoulde be driuen into dispayre: as though that were a safe protection for them for a time to be in a senſleſſe securitie: & as though they were in the better case, because they make no conscience of their sinnes. Wheras indeed those which are pricked and wounded with their sinnes, are in the way to repentance, whē the other are farre off.

Ath. I could like your wordes the better, but that ye would haue men not to truſt to their faith: is it not good to beleeue well?

Zelot. There is nothing good in men, vnleſſe they beleeue well: and we cannot truſt too muche vnto faith: but you doe not vnderstand what faith is. Tell

mee this, doth faith beleeue according as God setteth downe, and speaketh in his worde, or doth it beleeue contrary to that which God vttereth?

Ath. It doth not beléeue contrary to that which God vttereth.

Zelot. Let vs see then, when God setteth downe & sheweth which are the works of the flesh, and threatneth damnation vnto all those which walke in them: when God setteth down that the despisers of his word shalbe condemned: and yet men which are defiled with the filthinesse of the flesh, and walke after their corrupt lustes doe boldely bragge that they beleeue to be saued: & setting naught by Gods worde, say they trust in God: is this fayth? God affirmeth one thing, and yet they beleue the contrary: but see the blindnesse of men now adayes, when they heare vayne and brutishe men boast of their faith, yee doe well say they, to haue a good beliefe, when as in deed it is no more but a proud presumption, wherewith God is highly displesed, because by it they would make him a Lyar. When the sonne of man commeth, shall he find faith in earth? If this be fayth, he shall find great plenty of it euery where: For the Idolater, the swearer, the

drunkard, the proud, the Adulterer, are as full of faith as they can be thrust. For euerye one of these doth bragge that hee hath as good a faith to god, as he which is the most holy of all.

Ath. These may repent and bée saued, or els God forbid.

Zelot. I doe not speake what God is able to do in calling as he doth call some such vnto repentance: but what they haue in them presently. But I will see a little further howe great skil ye haue in the law of god, because ye need so litle preaching. What say ye vnto the seconde commaundement is it lawfull for a man to woorship idols?

Ath. I thanke God I doe not woorship any, for that is flatly forbidden.

Zelot. What say yee for the making of any image or picture of God, do yee thinke that is amisse?

Ath. For making it is no matter, so that a man haue no confidence in them.

Zelot. How doe yee then vnderstande the words of the commaundement whiche say, Thou shalt not make to thy selfe any graue- Exod. 20. 4
uen image, &c.

Ath. He meaneth that wee should not make any grauen Image to the intent to woorship

worship it.

Zelot. That is your owne addition for there is no such exception expressed, neyther can the order of the commaundement beare it: for he doth not say, Thou shalt not make to the intet to worship, but thou shalt neither make nor woorship.

Ath. If ye take it so, then why are Paynters allowed to make anye picture, how is it lawfull to haue the image of the Prince in Coyne?

Zelot. I wil shew yee your errour, you doe not vnderstande that the law was deuided into two Tables, & that in the first Table, which hath 4. commaundements, there is nothing commaunded or forbidden, but that which respecteth immediatly the worship and honour of GOD, he medleth not with any ciuill or pollitike matter: he doth absolutely forbid to make as I may terme it any diuine image, any similitude for to represent God, or to be like him: because as the scripture sheweth, there can no likenesse or similitude be made of GOD. For hee is a spirite of glory, infinite, incomprehensible which dwelleth in light, which none can come vnto: and therfore ye may read in the Epist. to the Ro. cap. 1. how horrible a sinne

it

it was to set vp any image or likenes of god: therfore the pictures of the trinitie and such like are very abhominable. But to let this passe, what say yee for the woorshipping of them: whether is it idolatry, or not, if a man meane to worship God by the image, and not the image it selfe?

Ath. How can that be idolatry, when a man doth worship none but GOD, hee knoweth that the image cannot helpe him.

Zelot. Then your meaning is that, vnlesse a man doe eyther worshippe the very image it selfe, or else some false God in the image that it is no idolatry?

Ath. I see no reason to the contrary: and I thanke GOD I neuer was so foolish as to take a blocke or a stone for to bee God.

Zelot. Then yee thinke your self cleere in this commaundement, yee were neuer any idolater: ye neuer kneeled or prayed vnto any idoll?

Ath. I haue kneeled before them, and prayed before them, but I neuer tooke them to be God, neither did I pray vnto any, saue vnto the Lord God. I trust God will neuer charge me to be an Idolater.

Zelot. All

Zelot. All you Atheists which haue no knowledge of God, are estemed as full of popish drosse as yee can hold, sauing that ye will not abide by it, but goe with the lawes of Princes, afrayd to lose the world, because ye haue made the world your God.

Ath. I defie poperye as muche as the best of ye all.

Zelot. Euen as much as ye defie the Diuell, whom ye serue dayly. For ye vse popish reasons to excuse your falling from God by Idolatry, and whereby a man may easily see that you are readye vnto it agayne if time serued.

Ath. Ise I must let ye alone to iudge what ye lust.

Zelot. Nay ye vse the very popish reasons: wherby they would proue when wee charge them with the breach of this commaundement, that they doe not committe idolatry: for say they, when the scripture doth condemne that sinne, it is meant of such as worship fayned Gods, as the heathē men did, or such as doe woorship the image it selfe, and take it for to be God. But I will deale with ye by Gods word. What doe ye suppose of the children of Israel, when they came to Aaron, to haue him make them

Gods

Gods to goe before them, when Moſes tarried ſo long in the mount: did they commit this great ſinne of idolatrie?

Ath. They did commit idolatrie, and the booke ſayth they were deſtroyed, a great number of them.

Zelot. What? was their intent, to woorſhip any beſides the true God?

Ath. That it was, for they deſired Aaron for to make them Gods.

Zelot. What thinke ye they tooke Aarō for to be, a man, or a God?

Ath. That is a queſtion in deede: howe could they thinke him to be a God:

Zelot. Did they thinke that Aaron beyng but a man had power for to make a God?

Ath. If they thought ſo, they were but foles.

Zelot. And if you thinke they thoughte ſo, yee ſhall prooue no great wiſe man. For which way can a man perſwade any, that a mā can make a God? Or could they become more brutiſhe then a Calfe, for to beleeue that the earerings of golde turned into the ſimilitude of a Calfe, were nowe become God? No my friende it is very playne that they meant no more but an image of God,

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and that which shoulde represent God, and put them in mind of him: ye must not think they were so foolish, although they were very foolishe as the holy Ghost in one Psalme chargeth them, that they turned their glory into the similitude of a Calfe which eateth hay. This then is playne ynough, that they meant not for to worship the golden calfe it selfe, but god in the calfe. Let vs see then, did they meane for to worship any other by the calfe, besides the true God?

Ath. It seemeth they did, or els why shuld they say gods, for there is but one God.

Zelot. Now ye are light vpon a very pore shift: for we may as well say, This is thy God O Israel, or make vs a God to goe before vs. For the scripture it selfe, in the Hebrewe tongue, although it teache that there is but one God, yet speaketh of him in the plurall number, and saith gods, for excellencie or dignities sake, as wee see Princes here in the world, when any of them speaketh, he doeth not say, I, but wee, not my person, but our person. For the Phrase of the scripture, I might alleadge diuers places, but you cannot vnderstand, but in your owne tongue: neuertheless I will cite one, it is in the Psal. Elohim Shophetim Hu: God is the iudge: but

but the words are, Gods he is iudges.

Ath. Can you proue that they meant to worship none but the true God?

Zelot. It is easie to be proued, both by the woordes of people them selues, when they say, these be thy Gods O Israel which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: they meant not to change their G O D which brought them out from Pharao, and ledde them through the red Sea, neither did they thinke that the Calfe whiche Aaron had made, was he which deuided the Sea, and drowned Pharao, with his Ost: but they tooke it for an image of that God, and not of any feyned God, & also by the wordes of Aaron, when he sayeth, Too morrowe shalbe a feast to Iehouah, which name was neuer giuen to eny, but to the God of heauen, at the least in those dayes, the God of Israel had that name peculiar vnto himself? The ye may see, they worshipped not the Idol it selfe, but God in the Idol, they meant not to worship any false god, but the god of heauen, which had deliuered them, and yet they did commit foule Idolatrie & fell from God in so much that God was exceeding wrath with them. Likewise in popery ye fell from God when ye bowed vnto images.

Ath. I

Ath. I hope not, because I did not as they did, they put a deuotion, in it, I meant no such thing, but to be obedient to a lawe.

Zelot. Then your meaning is, that you kept your hearte and conscience to God, and went with your body but for fashion.

Ath. So long as I did kéepe my conscience and heart to God, I trust I did well enough.

Zelot. Then you thinke God requireth not to be woorshipped but with your soule, and that you may serue the Diuel with your body. Ye thinke also that GOD doth not requyre the outwarde confession of the mouth, although it should be with losse of life.

Ath. Yée doe not heare mée saye, that wee may woʒshippe the Diuell with our bodyes.

Zelot. You might heare your selfe say so, but that ye say ye know not what: for herein ye are ignorant, that the worshippe of images is the woorshippe of Diuels. But I knowe there be many trimme wise heades, which excuse the matter & cleere theselues this way, that they make no deuotion of the image, or any other thing in the seruice of

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the Pope, their conſcience is free to God, they ſerue and feare him, what doth it hurt them, although they come outwardly with their body, vnto the other: what ſhould they in danger thēſelues in ſo ſmall a matter. But will ye heare me what I can ſay out of gods word againſt you and ſuch fellowes?

Ath. I will heare ye gladly, I am not ſo wilfull, as not to heare.

Zelot. There were amongſt the Corinthians, diuers Chriſtiās which were perſwaded that it was a matter indifferent to goe to the Idole temple, and there to ſit at the feaſt with the Infidels, which they made in honour of the Idole, & to eate of the meate which had beene ſlayne in ſacrifice vnto the Idole. They excuſed the fact in this wiſe, that they had knowledge, they vnderſtoode well that the Idole was not God, they went not of any deuotion at all as touching the worſhip and ſeruice which the heathen men did vſe, but for friendſhip and neighbourhood ſake, they woulde not refuſe to eate with ſuche as were their kinſfolkes or acquaintance: nowe although S. Paule doth mildly deale with them and anſwereth their reaſons in the 8. and 9. chap. Yet in the 10. chap. hee dealeth very roughly with them

setting before them the terrible example of Gods wrath vpon Idolaters, and sheweth plainely, that they were partakers of the table of diuels, & that they dranke of the cup of deuils, howsoeuer they thought they kept themselues, & their cõsciẽces free & vnpolluted. Euen so I conclude, that these worldlings which vse this shift, howe litle deuotiõ soeuer they haue, yet they haue not lesse thẽ the Corinthians had in the Idole feast, therfore, when S. Paul affirmeth, that they committed idolatrie, it must needes follow that these do much more.

Ath. Well, if the matter be so hearde, that it bee an offence, I trust God will forgiue me.

Zel. It is your manner although a sinne be neuer so fowle yet to make smal account of it, but like a dogge, that is wounded, yee thinke yee can by this meanes licke your selues whole, if ye can but say, I hope God will forgiue vs.

Ath. If you say true, then al our forefathers should be condemned, because they did worship images. I doubt not but God was as mercifull vnto them, as he is vnto men now. I thinke they pleased God better then we doe nowe; let not vs stande so muche in

our

our owne light.

Zelot. It is a maruellous thing for to ſee, howe the diuel doth dazle mens eyes, & how he doth bewitch them: theſe thinges which you vtter, and ſuch like, are euen like a vayle before your eyes, ſo that yee are not able for to haue any ſight into Gods word. How groſſe and doltiſhe ſo euer the matter be, if yee can ſay thus, our forefathers did it, will ye condemne thē, then al is ſafe enough But ſee how ye are ouerſeene, all our forefathers did not fal from God by idolatrie, for euen in the pride of the reigne of Antichriſt, there were ſome ſtood vp againſt him, in diuers countreys. There were alwayes ſome whō god lightened to ſee the abhominatiōs of the mā of ſin, & ſo to repēt & take hold of Chriſt: & god who is alwaies like himſelf, receiued thē to mercy. And doubtleſſe God is more now diſpleaſed with ſuch as doe now wilfully kicke & ſpurne againſt the truth, & ſeeke for to quench the glorious light of the goſpel, then he was with thē, from whō the worde of God was taken away, and beeing blind, they were made for to beleeue euerie lie, and therefore nowe when GOD offereth his grace, and ſeeketh by his worde to expel that groſſe darkenes it were good for ſuche as you, not to ſtande in your owne

light, and obstinately to refuse the knowledge of GOD. Our forefathers had that great plague came vpon them which S. Paul did foretell, 2. Thes. 2. Namely, that there shoulde bee a falling away, that Antichriste shoulde deceiue the world, and bring them to damnation: for God (he saith) shoulde sed them strong delusion euē for to beleeue lies, because they receiued not the loue of the truth, that they might be saued: & now whē God offereth his word againe, men do not ioyfully and thankefully embrace it, & therefore God doth sende them shepheards euen after their hearts desire: not to feede them (for they cannot) but to fleese them for that they can skill of: not to be salt for to season them, but to be euen lyke dungge cast vpon them for to corrupt them, not to giue them light, seeing thēselues are blinde. The greatest number of ye are as farre from God, as they were euen in the blyndest time of Poperie, and that is confessed by your owne mouth, when ye say ye would followe our forefathers: For yee meane not those Forefathers which did knowe and worship God aright, but those which were seduced, and fell from him by Idolatry. I am verye loth for to question with yee any further in

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the commaundements yee are ſo exceeding blynd in them. For I know that in our land, let al the people be numbred, and fiue parts of yee doe vnderſtand ſo much in the commaundements, Lords prayer, & Articles of the faith, that it were a greate ſhame for a godly man to haue a childe of x. yeeres old for to know no more.

Ath. How can yée tell that, I think ye goe beyond your booke, haue yée poſed all?

Zelot. I goe not ſo farre beyonde my booke as you thinke I doe. And although I haue not poſed al, yet I haue poſed ſo many that I knowe what the ſtate of the moſt is. This I finde that in the beſt and moſt religious townes generally, the greateſt part haue very litle zeale. This I find, that where there is one of theſe townes which are forwarde, there be fiue which are not, becauſe they want teaching. This further I knowe by experience, that thoſe which are the willing ones, and as it were the daily hearers for a long time are very raw when they be examined. The iudge you what is in the reſt, which are very ſeldome taught, or refuſe for to be taught: and if this be not true, let mee looſe my hād. And yet there be idle bellies whiche are not aſhamed with open mouth to crye

that lesse preaching woulde serue, and that there is knowledge enough among the people: when the poore people doe not vnderstād so much as the lords praier: vnlesse they would hold them still in popery, they can be no more ignorant.

Ath. I could like the better, if the preaching might be only vpō the sabboth day: but now they runne in the worke dayes, & leaue their businesse, and begger themselues: they goe to other townes also, which is pitie that it is suffered: it is a great disorder.

Zelot. He is said to be blessed, which hath his delight in the law of the lord, & which doth meditate therin day & night. I confesse that the sabboth day is the chief time to seek for knowledge. But that man which hath so litle loue to the word, that he cānot bestow one houre in a week for to heare it, & yet cā bestow diuers houres in vain talking drinking & gāning, is but a dull scholler vpō the sabboth day: I warrāt ye if a man look wel vnto him, he shal find it hard to iudge whether he or the seat he sate on, carried away most: & for leauing their busines so far as they may cōueniētly, would ye haue thē forget the precept of our sauiour Christ, first, seek the kingdome of god, & his righteousnes, & then all these things shalbe cast vpō ye. The soul with

you

you is lesse to be cared for, then the body ye preferre this life before eternal life: & as for this, that mẽ come for to be beggers by following sermons, that they sell their kine, & that they are fayne to be gathered for in the church: ye haue a bowget ful of these lies, & ye need but euẽ a mill for to grind thé. They are taught by the word preached, to follow their labours painfully, and the blesing of god is vpõ més labours, which do seek him & the knowledge of his worde: & although it sometime doth hinder thé one houre, yet it saueth thé & gaineth them many houres, which they were wont to bestow vainely.

Ath. I doe not like this so euill as the other when they runne frõ towne to towne so disorderedly.

Zelot. I pray yee tell mee if there were a dearth of corne, how farre would ye goe to fetch corne, rather then starue: I beleeue as farre as the sonnes of Iacob, when they went out of the land of Chanaan into Egypt.

Ath. I count him a fole, which wil not goe a great way off to buy his corne, rather then starue.

Zelot. Hee is a starke foole, whiche will not goe a great way rather then starue his bodye: but hee is not a foole which will not once steppe out at his doore

for too seeke the euerlasting foode of his soule.

Ath. Those are not alike, wee must needes seeke for to liue.

Zelot. No, you cannot see them for to bee alike, you see well in thinges of this world, but for heauenly thinges, yee see nothing: but to come to the matter, it is great pitie indeede, that there shoulde be such disorder, as that men shoulde run from towne to towne to heare sermons: Our Saviour Christ pitied them when they came into the wildernesse for to heare him, because hee sayeth they were as sheepe without a shepheard. But you and your mates are not grieued with the same pitie: yee are as like a malicious dogge as can be, which lyeth vppon the hay, and will eate none, neither will suffer the Oxe which would. Woe bee vnto yee Scribes and Pharisies, yee Hypocrites, yee shut vp the kingdome of heauen before men, yee enter not in your selues, neyther doe ye suffer those which would enter. Mat. 23.14.

Ath. You say they goe to seeke foode for their soules, and to learne for to knowe God: but they doe it of vayne glory.

Zelot. There

Zelot. There be alwayes ſome no doubt which doe not ſeeke of a ſincere minde but of vaine glory, and doe abuſe their knowledge, and are vainely puffed vp in themſelues, with an opinió of thoſe things which are not in them: but will you giue ſentence againſt all becauſe ſome are ſuch. Is this a good argument, men giue almes for vaine glory, men come to the Churche, and pray of vaine glory: Therefore almes and prayer are to bee lefte: for doubtleſſe ſome doe thoſe things for vaine glory, euen as our Sauiour Chriſt accuſeth the Scribes and Phariſies.

Ath. **But Chriſt biddeth vs doe thoſe things. How will ye proue that we are cõmaunded to doe this?**

Zelot. I knowe no place which hath in plaine wordes, Goe vnto other countries or townes for to heare preaching, and why becauſe the will of God is that they ſhould haue preachers come home vnto them, and be appoynted ouer them for to feede them. I might alleadge examples of good men which ſought after Chriſt, whom he did not forbid. Doe ye thinke when the Lord commaundeth vs to ſeeke him ſo earneſtly. and that in the myſtery of his Goſpel, that a few

myles

myles ought for to ſtoppe vs. Howe farre thinke yee men run for a little earthly ſubſtance? How farre do they runne on heapes, both men & womē, vnto feaſts, maygames, dauncings, playes, bearebaytings and other ſuch vanities?

Ath. Youth will be doing, yée muſt not blame them, they haue time enough to bee holy hereafter. I haue had as great delight my ſelfe o; now in thoſe things as one, but now I ware olde.

Zelot. I was ſure ye woulde allow this kind of running frō towne to towne, this is no diſorder at all, how many are there of ye which crye out with open mouth, againſt ſuch as ſeeke after the worde, & ſeeke for to trouble & puniſh them for ſo doyng, which once open your mouth againſt theſe foule abuſes? Whereas ye ſay, youth will be doing, ye ſay true, & ſo wil many aged likewiſe, but doth it follow therefore that they muſt bee ſuffered to doe the thinges which are euill. In that yee ſay, they haue time enough to be holy hereafter, therein ye ſhew your ſelfe to be a right worldling, a very epicure an ignorant man: for thus your worldly Epicures doe ſpeake, youth will haue their race, let them alone, what ſhould young men and maydes

mayds do with the ſcriptures? cleane contrary vnto that whiche God ſpeaketh by his Prophet. Wherewithall ſhall a young man cleanſe his way, euen by taking heede thereto according to thy word? Likewiſe by Salomon in the booke of Eccleſiaſtes chap. 11. Remember thy creator in the dayes of thy youth. But now a daies it is a principal point of diuinitie, that youth may walke after the luſts of the fleſhe, ſo long vntil through cuſtome of ſinning, they are ſo beſotted and hardened in their wicked luſts, & their concupiſcences are growen ſo ſtrong, that there cā no grace enter into them, & ſo it ſeemeth for to be with you, for I dare warrāt you are able to tel a long tale of your youth trickes. Pſal. 119. 9

Ath. Well, I am as I am, you cannot make me better, & I truſt yᵉ ſhall make me no woꝛſe. Yᵉ ſpeake as though none coulde be good but ſcripture men.

Zelot. None can be good but ſuch as feare God, ſuche as ſeeke for to obey him: None feare god, which ſet light by his ordinances and caſt them behynde their backes: None can obey GOD but ſuche as doe ſeeke for to knowe and followe thoſe preceptes which hee vttereth in his woorde. None are godly, but ſuch as are clenſed, and guide their wayes by the worde. Hee whiche is

of

of God heareth Gods word.

Ath. If they be so good and godly, how commeth it to passe then, that there is so much debate among them: for I knowe townes my selfe, which are euē deuided one part against another, since they had a preacher, which were not so before. This they sayne, that whereas before they loued together, nowe there is dissention sowen among them.

Zelot. Nowe yee discharge your greatest ordinance: I trow ye haue now payde it home: It is harde if Satan cannot with this engine ouerthrowe and beate downe preaching. But I pray you tell mee, can yee put fire and water together but they will rumble? Will yee haue light and darknesse for to agree as companions together?

Ath. What is this to the matter?

Zelot. Woulde yee haue God and the Diuell agree together, woulde yee haue the Godlie and the wicked for to be at one? this ye must do, ye looke where the fault is to be layde.

Ath. I thinke the fault must nēdes be layd vpon the preaching, because they agrēed before that came.

Zelot. If

Zelot. If their agreement together before had beene good, then no doubt the preaching that ſhould breake it could not be good: for one good thing cannot deſtroy another. But the former peace was not in GOD, but in the fleſhe: neyther was it ſo great as you would ſeeme for to ſet it forth, becauſe that the worldlinges are alwayes at ſtrife, and one readye for to cut anothers throate: but yet their hatred is ſo exceeding great againſt the Goſpell, that in reſpect of the minde, which they carry towardes the profeſſors thereof, they ſeeme among them ſelues to be at peace, and one to loue and make much of another.

Ath. **Where is the fault then for to be layde?**

Zelot. Vpon the wicked which fret and rage againſt the word, becauſe it layeth open and diſcloſeth their filthineſſe, and bewrayeth them. For the light (as S. Paul ſaith) doth manifeſt all things. They pretende other excuſes, as though they hated the profeſſors for ſome euill conditions: but this is very euident, a blind man almoſt may diſcerne it, that ſo long as a man is voyde of religion, & maketh profeſſion of no more then they, ſo long, although he be full, and ſwarme with

great

great vices, he is an honeſt man, but let him follow the word, & be carefull ſo, to amend, then there is not a lewder fellowe vpon the earth, diuers ſlaunders ſhalbe rayſed, things ſhall be reckoned vp which he did 7. yeeres agone: & nowe they hate him like a dogge.

Ioan. 3. 19. Light is come into the world, and men loue darkeneſſe more then light, becauſe their workes be euill. Will yee charge Chriſt and his Goſpel, becauſe as he ſayth, he came not to ſend peace, but a ſworde, to ſet the father againſt the ſonne. Mat. 10. 35. Or will yee laye the blame vpon thoſe which loue the lyght. Will ye blame S. Paul and his preaching becauſe there was ſtir & hurley burley almoſt wherſoeuer he came. Was he to be blamed, or the wicked Infidels, which coulde not abide to haue their ſinnes reproued.

Ath. There be ſome places where they haue graue & learned preachers, & yet there is no ſuch contention in their pariſhes: I like that well.

Zelot. You like that well: ſo doth your maiſter alſo.

Ath. What meane you by that? whom doe yée call my maiſter?

Zelot. Euen the Diuell, for hee is content thoſe Preachers ſhoulde ride vpon his backe

back, becauſe he is ſure they will not ſpurre gall him: they be very gentle riders. Doe yee not thinke, that if they ſhoulde ſet foorth Gods word as they ought, and ſpread the light: that all wicked men (of which their pariſh are full) would ſtorme & fret againſt them? the Diuell himſelf would ſiske about if they ſhould ſpurre him but a little. But they can tel a ſmooth tale in the pulpit, garniſhed with ſome merry ſtory, for to make the people merry: or els ſome old rotten allegorie: or ſome farre fetched matter out of ſome great writers, that the people may bee at their wits ende, and admit them: A man would thinke to ſee the people come out of the Church blowing, that they were fed as ful as tickes: when they go home with emptie bellies. This I dare warrant, if it be not ſo let me loſe both mine eares, that go thorow the pariſhes of theſe graue and learned diuines, and except ſuche as runne to fetche their victuals other where, yee ſhall not find fiue among fiueſcore which are able to vnderſtande the neceſſary groundes and principles of religion: and yet the people wil ſay they bee excellent deepe men: But I loue not thoſe Welles whiche are ſo deepe

that

that a man can drawe no water out of them.

Ach. I see you like better of young rashe heades, and troublesome fellowes, then ye doe of graue staied men: for nowe a dayes there are a number which take vpon them to preach, which in deede do but prattle: and for my part, I will beleeue none of them: but I will rather giue credite to that which auncient learned men do speake.

Zelot. I do vtterly mislike that any rash head shoulde haue the office of preaching, which is a thing of so great dignitie, as to be the mouth of God vnto the people, to vtter the counsels and mysteries of the Lord, and to teach them the way to saluation: and great dishonour to God and his Gospell it is, if there be many such, as you say there be: but if they be godly, learned, graue, discrete, and wise, and doe faithfully and zealously dispose the manifould mysteries of God: the the matter is not whether they bee young or olde: for the doctrine which they doe teach and expounde, is not their owne, but the doctrine of Christ, the authoritie is not of them, but of God which hath giuen it. But I knowe your meaning, you count all those to be ignorant, and to prattle, which doe

doe not preach according to your humor, such as doe sharpely inueigh against your vanities: and those which doe not, they bee learned and graue men, let vs beleeue them: and so yee looke not what God saith, but what men say: and surely those kinde of graue men doe great hurt: I meane such as carry a great shewe of learning in them, and scarce any are the better for it.

Ath. And I thinke they doe muche good.

Zelot. You think they do much good: but I know they doe very much hurte: the blind and vnlearned Ministers are hurteful, those which are popish priestes doe hurte, they which followe euill vices, as drunken Ministers, swearers, quarrellers, Adulterers, gamesters & such like do hurt, but yet these which you speake of, doe more hurte: I will tell yee howe, where there is such an one as those aboue named, the people haue no great opinion of them, for they can easily say, alas our minister is not able nor meete for to teache vs, and so they are willing to heare and to be informed by others: but those which haue one of your profounde Clearkes, the people so much hange vpon him, that they will heare none other: Thus

they say, our Preacher is as profound a man as any of them all: if we were out of the way hee would tell vs, if so much teaching were needfull, woulde not hee teach vs? if suche thinges were euil, would he vse them? and so they cõclude, that they care not for learning ought sauing at his mouth, when as indeed he teacheth them litle or nothing, peraduenture hee giueth them a colde collation once a moneth, and when a man shall take the proofe of them, he shall finde that they are no better then such as haue a dũbe Idoll to their shepheard.

Ath. Is it not better for to haue a Sermon now and then, and to haue it a learned Sermon: then for to haue many without learning? I think one such sermõ doth more good thẽ an hundreth of those flying sermõs.

Zelot. I graunt thus muche, that the worde of God is to bee handled with great care, men are not to steppe foorth and to speake rashly, and without sure & vndoubted knowledge of the things which they vtter. Moreouer, there ought to be such learning and discretion, as shalbee sufficient to open and to manifest the power and dignitie of the word vnto the consciences of the hearers: he must be able for to make plaine

the

the sense of the scriptures, and hee must apply it to the hearers which doth preach. For to handle the holie mysteries of God vnskilfully is a vice greatly to bee condemned, and I thinke such, although they preach neuer so often, shall doe but litle good. But I pray you let mee knowe which you count a learned sermon; and which yee call a flying sermon.

Ath. **What is a learned sermon, when the Preacher doth lay open the matter learnedly.**

Zelot. You meane when hee is able to speake much latine, and to alleadge all sorts of writers.

Ath. **I count those learned fellowes in deed, I wil not geue a button for these English Doctors which can alledge no more but out of Paule and Peter.**

Zelot. It woulde bee a notable learned sermon then if the Preacher shoulde speake all latine.

Ath **Then we which doe not vnderstande latine shoulde bee neuer the better.**

Zelot. If so litle coulde pleasure yee, then no doubt a whole sermon would edifie yee muche. But suche vayne men as you

doe shew your vanitie, when ye looke more after those thinges which should feede your eares, then for to haue your soules conuerted. Is that to be vsed which cannot edifie at all, but serueth for a vaine shew, and disturbeth the mynd and memory of the diligent hearer. But let this goe, and let vs see the other, for alleadging of writers, in this matter ye haue sundry graue men of your side, which counte those sermons learned, which are set foorth with all sortes of authorities, and those which bring the bare worde out of the Bible, they make but verball Sermons? But doubtlesse they may shewe some grauitie in their bearde, for there is none in the matter.

Ath. Are they not thereby knowne for to bee learned men, euery Plowe man nowe a dayes canne alleadge out of Saint Paule.

Zelot. They are thereby knowne for to be vnskilfull men, and such as are not rightly instructed in the doctrine of S. Paule. They make a great shewe of learning and yet want the knowledge of the digniti of gods word. When as they bring in the sayings of Plato, and Aristotle, as fellowes and companions with the oracles of God vttered by his Prophets

phets and Apostles, and as though there were greater & deeper matter in those, then in the Bible, whereas all the heauenly mysteries and counsels of God are vttered, they sticke not to count that vnlearned which is brought from thence, and greate learning to be in the sayings of the other. For this cause they do also seeke for to garnish their sermons, and as it were for to set them with pearle, when as in effect they doe nothing else but as if a man shoulde mingle dedde with pure golde, and claye with precious oyle. And because ye speake of learning, tell me what ye thinke, whether Saynt Augustine or Saint Paule, was the better learned?

Ath. You should aske that question of such as are learned, woulde ye haue me tel ye?

Zelot. Is not hee which doth alleadge sentences out of Augustine, Ambrose, Hierome, & Cyprian, better learned then they which alleadge out of Moses, Esay, Peter, Paule, or Iohn.

Ath. I told ye before, that euery man can alleadge out of these, & if I could reade, and had a Byble, I coulde do it also, but to alleadge out of the other, none can doe that,

but such as are greate Clearkes.

Zelot. Then it seemeth that they were better then Paul, and Peter, or Moses, or els why shoulde they bee esteemed to be better learned which doe cite them?

Ath. If I might shote my bolte, I thinke they were the learneder, because their writinges are so profounde.

Zelot. I would you did thinke so alone, but in deede the people haue been so deluded with such as would make a shew of learning that multitudes are of your minde, which bringeth in a vile and shamefull abasing of the most holie and sacred Bible. But let me aske yee certaine questions. Doe yee not thinke that if the writinges of those men were to bee redde in our tongue, that euery man then coulde bee able to alleadge out of them, as they doe out of the Byble?

Ath. I thinke they might then bee able.

Zelot. Doe yee suppose those shoulde by and by bee esteemed for to bee learned, whiche doe then alleadge sayinges out of them?

Ath. I see no cause why thē they should be counted so.

Zelot,

Zelot. Is he learned in the Bible, which can alleadge many sentences?

Ath. A man maye speake muche and know little.

Zelot. You might see likewise that men may alleadge sayings out of great Doctors, and yet themselues be great Dawes: for he is learned whom God doth teach for to vnderstād the heauēly Misteries vttered by the Prophets & Apostles: and in vttering them, doeth followe the steppes of Paule and the rest. The Doctors had all their true learning out of the Bible: for in it is set foorth that wisedome which is aboue all.

Ath. The Scriptures are darke and harde, and therefore men nowe doe not vnderstande them as the Doctors did. And for this cause, I haue heard preachers say, they are to be vouched.

Zelot. Those Preachers might haue beene wiser then for to maintayne two so grosse opinions; The first, accusing the scriptures of such darknes, as though they could not be vnderstood where as indeede in the principall and most necessary pointes, the Lorde hath spoken so clearly, that very simple men may bee taught for to see the

playne euidence of the word. The other depriueth the church of the true interpreter of the word, which is the ſpirit of God, as though the lord did not now giue ſuch gifts as he gaue to thoſe Doctors: which is a popiſh opinion alſo: for ſo long as God giueth his word to the church, ſo long hee giueth the interpreter of the ſame, although not in all ages alike: but whoſoeuer is not blynde, may eaſily ſee, that in this age there bee as great giftes beſtowed vppon the church, as euer were in any, ſince the time of the Apoſtles.

Ath. **Then you are one of thoſe which deface the olde Fathers, when yee will not allow them for to bee cyted in the Sermons. To what vſe then ſhoulde men reade them?**

Zelot. That is a very falſe accuſation: ſhould a man bee accuſed for defacing the honour of the Lord Chauncellour, becauſe he would deny him the dignitie and honor of the Prince? Likewiſe ſhall a man be ſayde for to iniury or deface the Doctors, becauſe hee will not giue them the dignitie which doth belong vnto G O D alone? the Preacher is the mouth of God vnto the people, and not the mouth of men: hee is not for

to vtter doubfull matter and vncertaine, but ſuch as may be moſt euident. He muſt ſay, and proue euen vnto the conſcience of the hearer, thus God ſpeaketh, and thus he meaneth. He cannot ſay Auguſtine ſayth it therefore God ſaith it, Auguſtine ſayth it, therefore it is vndoubtedly true, for Auguſtine might and did erre many waies. But he may ſay, Saint Paule ſayth it, therefore God himſelf ſaith it, S. Paule ſaith it, therfore it is vndoubtedly true: for looke what he ſaith, or any other apoſtle, Euangeliſt or prophet God hath ſet it downe, by them, it is his, & not theirs: they are but the inſtrumentes which he vſed for to vtter and penne his wil; his ſpirite in them ruled the whole in this caſe, ſo that they did not, nor coulde not erre: now when the Preacher doth lay open their ſaying, not he, nor they, but god ſpeaketh: as they were the mouth of God for to ſet it downe, ſo is hee nowe againe the mouth of G O D, for to recite and declare it.

Ath. The word of God is certeine and ſure, becauſe God cannot lie, but how ſhall I knowe which is the true ſenſe of it: ſhall I beleeue euery man which doth interprete the word? Shall I not the better beleeue him

if hée say it is not my interpretation, but S. Ierome hée saith so, S. Augustine he saith so. I promise yée hée shall haue the greater credite with me, for they were other maner of men then hée.

Zelot. I cannot but maruel to see how grosse & dull your head is for to learne the truth, and how redily you can bring out such matters as this: ye speake not of your own head. I would there were no greater learned men then you blinded in this matter. But let me shewe yee your grosse errour. Yee say the worde is certaine and sure: but the interpretation therof yee make doubtfull: but what are we the better that the worde of God is sure and certaine, vnlesse it bee sure and certayne vnto vs, which cannot bee except the interpretation be so. It is as good for yee to say the word is doubtfull, as for to say the sense is doubtfull: Nowe when as yee hang the sense vppon men can yee deny but that still it is in doubt. This must needes arise in the minde, those doctors said so, but they might erre, and therefore I am not certayne, that this is the sense. If this shal be admitted in the Church, what shall become of that πληροφορία, or full certeintie of faith, which the word of God doth require

to

to be in vs, it is grounded vpon the word of God, for it cannot ſtand otherwiſe.

Moreouer, faith is ſure what god meaneth, or els it is no faith: therefore ſuche as woulde hang mens faith vpon the authoritie of men, where they muſt needes ſtil be in doubt, and when they are at the furtheſt, they come but vnto this, it is very like for to be true becauſe ſuch notable men ſpeake it, do not knowe a right what faith is, for that yee ſay hee ſhall haue the more credite with you, if hee ſay, It is not my ſaying, but the ſaying of Auguſt. therein yee were euen as good ſay, that your faith is built vpon men, and not vpon God: For if yee doe beleeue becauſe ſome great learned or godly man telleth yee the matter, this is no true beleefe, for wee muſt bee fully perſuaded that God himſelfe doth tell vs, or els wee be neuer the neere.

Ath. Howe ſhall I knowe when God ſpeaketh, or which God ſpeaketh, you come and preach one way, another commeth and he doth preach an other way, ye preach one cõtrary vnto an other, you ſay God ſpeaketh, hee ſayth God ſpeaketh, which ſhall wee beleeue? Is not hee to bee beſt beleeued, which can ſhew that thoſe great doctors

are

are on his side.

Zelot. See what a grounde you leane vnto, you know not when GOD speaketh, nor what God speaketh: and therefore yee wil haue some of the old Doctors for to tel: are yee sure he telleth yee right, if yee be, it is because he sheweth ye the worde of God, why he telleth ye so, the credite must be giuen vnto the word, and not to the man. But you say yee can not tell when one doth alleadge the word in the true meaning, howe then, can ye tel when one alleadgeth the doctor in the true meaning, hee which will falsifie the word of god in the Bible, he wil not sticke for to falsifie the meaning of the Doctor: you may search the scriptures, to see whether the testimonies alleadged be so, as the men of Berea did, when Paule preached, Act. 17.11. You cannot, neyther are ye commaunded for to searche the Doctors. And vnlesse ye see the manyfest authority of gods word, ye are not bound for to beleeue, but if it be plainly shewed, that God hath spoken, then ye are bounde vnder the paine of damnation, for to giue credite vnto it. Christ sayeth, My sheepe, heare my voyce, a straunger they will not heare. Iohn 10. Also S. Iohn saith, brethren, beleeue not euery

spirite

ſpirite, but try the ſpirites, whether they be of God 1. Iohn. 4. he therfore which ſayth, I cannot tell when the voyce of Chriſt is vttered, it is all one as if he ſhoulde ſay, I am none of the ſheepe of Chriſt becauſe (as he ſaith) Euery one of his ſheepe doe knowe his voyce. He that ſayth I knowe not which preacher doth preach trueth, and which falſhood, he may euen as well ſay, I am none of thoſe, to whom the holy Ghoſt ſpeaketh, and ſaith: Trie the ſpirites whether they be of God, it is a general precept giuen vnto al Chriſtians.

Ath. Yee ſhall neuer make me beleeue that euery man is for to iudge, whether the Preacher ſpeake true or falſe.

Zelot. I knowe not what I ſhall be able for to make yee beleeue, But I am ſure I can playnely ſhewe what yee ought to beleeue. Firſt, marke this, the word came not from man, neyther can a man teach it yee, vnleſſe God reueale it by his ſpirite: if it were the wiſedome of the world, or of the fleſh, then the ſpirite of the world which is in man & knoweth the ſecretes of man, coulde teache it: but becauſe it is the miſterie of GOD none can make yee learne it, but the holy Ghoſt, which ſearcheth euen the deepe

thinges

things of God, as S. Paul teacheth. 1. Cor. 2. To. Saint Iohn in his first Epistle, Chapter the second, hauing told the that there were euen then many Antichrists, he comforteth them with this. You saith he, haue receiued an annoynting from the holy one & knowe all thinges. Like as therefore none of those can learne, whom God doth not illighten with his spirite, so on the contrary parte all those which are taught within by the spirit, doe feele when the doctrine which the same spirite hath taught, is vttered: hee knoweth his owne, and he sealeth it vp in their hearts and consciences, which being instructed by him must needes consent thereto fully. For this cause there is great difference betweene such as set all vpon the authorities of men, and such as preach, as S. Paule saith hee did, with the plaine euidence of the spirite, and of power. 1. Cor. 2. 4. hee addeth the reason in the next verse, that their faith should not consist in the wisedome of men, but in the power of God. If fayth may not hang vpon the wisdome of men. And therefore the intising speech which mans wisedom teacheth to be auoyded in setting forth the Gospell, then can it not stande vpon the authorities of men.

Ath. Is it not lawfull in any respect for

to alleadge them.

Zelot. Yes no doubt there are circumstances, which may make it sometime very needfull. I speake only against this, that they are alleadged when as we may alleadge the same thinges out of the worde it selfe. And when they are alleadged, for men to buylde their faith vpon, or to make men think that there cā be no certeinty in the interpretatiō of the word, but where as they are made for to speak. Whē as indeed the preacher in his Sermon must come with such euidence and make his proofe so plaine & so strong, that it must needs cōuince the conscience of the hearers, in such wise that of necessity he shal be forced for to say, vndoutedly that which this man vttereth, is that which god himselfe speaketh: for so saith the apost. 1. Cor. 14. 24 If saith he, al do prophesie, & there come in an infidell, or one vnlearned, he is reproued of all, he is iudged of all: and so the secretes of his heart are made manifest, & falling vpon his face, he will worship God, confessing that God is verily among yee. This testimonie doth shew that the force of Gods word vttered nakedly is suche, that it conuicteth the heart of the infidell, & compelleth him for to confesse that god is with them which speake it.

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The word of God is described in the Epistle to the Hebrewes cap. 4. 12. after this sort: the word of God (saith hee) is liuely and mightie in operation, sharper then any two edged swoord, and entreth in vnto the deuiding asunder of the soule & the spirite, of the ioyntes and the marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughtes and intentes of the heart. Men might vnderstand by this, that by whomsoeuer this sword of the spirite be drawne foorth, if it bee rightly handeled, it will pearce through, and through both the bodies and soules of the hearers, and will moue euery vayne in the heart, euen of the wicked. So that he needeth not for to grind it or make it sharpe vpon the gryndstone of Ambrose or Hierom.

Ath. When you destroy learning, if yée take away the writings of the Doctors, for they serue to no vse: if it be as you say, why should students reade them?

Zelot. There is great benefite in reading of them, for to helpe vs to the true vnderstanding of the scriptures.

Ath. If they help yée to vnderstand the scriptures, wherfore doe yée not whē yée expounde the scriptures, tell which is theirs. Yée robbe them and take the glory to your

selues

ſelues.

Zelot. Nowe yee reaſon as buſſardlike as can bee, yee may be a Doctor of Dunces, for this argument. Doth the Preacher come in his owne name, muſt hee tell his owne will, or is hee to ſeeke his owne glory or the glory of any other man? If other haue holpen him to finde the knowledge of Gods will, which hee muſt vtter, is it therfore become theirs, becauſe they haue ſhewed it vn to him: If hee nowe ſet it foorth in the name of the Lord alone, whoſe it is, doth hee robbe them? For looke whatſoeuer a man findeth in the auncient writers in expounding, he is no further to beleeue them then they prooue theyr expoſition out of the Bible: ſo that it continueth ſtill not theirs, but the Lordes: and if we ſhoulde aſcribe it vnto them, wee ſhoulde robbe the Lorde, and be theeues for other men. Therfore in this matter wee muſte followe the precept which the Lorde giueth. 1. Peter. 4. 11. Hee that ſpeaketh let him ſpeake as the wordes of God.

Ath. Is that ſo meant, that it is not allowed to cite any thing out of other bookes beſides the worde?

Zelot. I tolde yee before that it is not simply vnlawfull for to cite or alledge a sentence out of a Doctor. But the maner and ende of the doing of it is all: I say likewise that a man maye in some sorte alleadge a saying out of any heathen or prophane Writer: for wee haue the example of Saint Paule. Actes 17. 1. Corin. 15. 33. Titus 1. Alleadging the sayinges of prophane Poets. But wee must see to what ende: doth he reason thus, the Poet sayth it, therefore yee are to giue credite vnto it: no man woulde bee so foolishe as to make their wordes being heathen men, to bee of such authoritie: but he sheweth that euen their owne doctors consented with him in those thinges. And therefore a shame, and foule reproche for them to bee ignorant of the same. When the Papistes doe charge vs to be gone from the fayth of the olde Fathers, although wee are to confute them this way, namely, by shewing their treachetie and lying, when wee are able to prooue by the writings of the auncient fathers that in the chiefe pointes they fully agree with vs: yet this is not the way whiche God hath appoynted and sanctified for the con-

conuersion and education of his people: this engine is ouer weake to reare vp the Temple of the Lorde: wee must take heede wee leaue not the mighty worde it selfe, and leane vnto a tottering piller: Saint Paule sheweth the power of the woorde 2. Cor. 10. where hee sayth, although wee walke in the flesh, yet wee warre not after the flesh: for the weapons of our warrefare are not carnall, but mightie in God for to throwe downe holdes: which he expoundeth in the verse which followeth, to bee the imaginations & euery high thing which is exalted against the knowledge of God, and euery thought, which (he sayth) they lead captiue vnto the obedience of Christe. There is no power nor any authoritie can doe these thinges, but that which is in the worde of God it selfe. Which is to bee made so euident by the Preacher, that it may bring this thing to passe.

2 Cor. 10. 3. 4. 5.

The miserable experience in our time of suche as flie from the strong power of the worde, and fight with the weapons of menne, may teache vs, because it doth manifestly appeare vnto all whiche haue eyes too see, that they are not

strong enough to throwe downe holdes, and to leade captiue vnto the obedience of Christe, the rebellious thoughtes and imaginations of mens mindes: they cannot shewe a man by them conuerted syncerely and throughly from errours and euill maners: by alleadging the authorities of men. It was not the practise of the auncient and godly Fathers in their sermons for to leaue the testimonies of the mightie word, which is able to rent the stony rocke in peeces, and to cleaue to the authorities of weake men, which were gone before them. But what shoulde a man say? The worde is thought to be of no power vnlesse it be strengthned otherwise.

But let vs leaue this and come backe againe to some of your other matters. I remember yee did lay this as a great accusation against the preachers that they medled with predestination.

Ath. I did so, and not without cause, for they doe greate hurt thereby vnto many, when they teach such thinges.

Zelot. What hurt can yee shewe, which commeth by preaching of Predistenation.

Ath,

Ath. If a man bée chosen for to bée saued, let him doe as euil as hée can hée shall not bée damned: and if a man be appointed before hée was borne to bée damned, let him doe neuer so much good hée cannot bée saued: and therefore when ye teach this doctrine, ye were euen as good tel the people that they may liue as they lust: Let them neuer heare teaching, to what pourpose should it serue?

Zelot Howe proude and presumptuously bolde, ignorance doth make a mã? It might seeme to be a rare thing that a mortall man, which is but clay and dust, yea a rotten Carrion shoulde aduaunce him selfe against God, euen the Lorde of infinite wisdome and glory, but that wee see it dayly for to be common.

Ath. Doe not accuse mée for to bee proude, I would I were as frée from all other faultes, if it pleased God.

Zelot. If ye were as sick, as ye be proud a very litle meate would giue yee your supper. But I know you doe not see your pride.

Ath. I marueil why ye shoulde counte mée proude, ye see how plaine I goe.

Zelot. You thinke that pride is in the

coate, when it is in the hearte, a man may haue a kinges hearte in his breſt, and yet a beggers coate vpon his backe. There is cauſe why yee doe not goe gay, yee are not able: for take the raggeddeſt begger in the worlde, and giue her the ſame wing whiche the great Ladyes haue, and yee ſhall ſee her flie the ſame flight. There is pride agaynſt GOD, and againſt men, and you are in the deepeſt of them, euen againſte God.

Ath. Paraque that, becauſe yé condemne mé ſo ſore.

Zelot. Yee take your ſelfe for to bee wiſe, and the Lorde vndiſcrete and vnwiſe. For yee charge him with folly when as yee ſay this doctrin doth ouerthrow al, & yet he hath expreſſed it in ſundry places of his word. If it bee ſo exceeding hurtfull, then ſurely Chriſte was to bee blamed: Saint Paule, and Saint Peter with the reſt of the Apoſtles were very vndiſcreete, beauſe they haue ſet it forth. It ſeemeth that it had beene good for them to haue taken aduiſe of the deepe heades of the worlde, whiche might haue foretolde them the daunger which woulde followe, and haue

sayde, Maisters take heede howe yee deale with such doctrine, it will turne yee vnto discredite. O foolishe wise flesshe, this matter is ouer farre beyonde thy reache, thou canst neuer come within the smell of it.

Ath. Smell, or smell not, let me heare yée answere the matter.

Zelot. You suppose that your reasons are vnanswerable, and that causeth yee to bee so freshe and ready, but alas man, your halfpenie is no good siluer, yee are in a wrong boxe, I will shewe yee how childishly yee erre.

Forsoothe say you, if God hath chosen a man to saluation before hee was borne, then let him doe as enyll as hee can, hee shall not bee damned: and whereas the nature of man is prone and readye to seeke after the libertie of the flesshe, this doth open a doore vnto him, and a wide passage vnto all euill, because hee needeth not to care what hee doth, it is appoynted before hande what shal become of him.

This mightie and inuincible reason of yours hath neuer an eye to see with all, & although it seeme for to haue good legges

yet is it but an olde Cripple: bee not led by it, for ye shal both fall into the ditch. Did yee neuer heare what S. Paule sayth, Ephesians. Chapter. 1.4. these are his woordes, as hee hath chosen vs in him, before the foundations of the worlde were layde, that wee shoulde bee holy and without blame before him through loue. Howe stande these two thinges together, when you say if men bee chosen they may liue as they lust, and God sayth by his Apostle, that hee hath chosen them for to bee holy and blameless in their conuersation. And this is vndoubtedly true, that those whom God hath predestinate to be heires of glory, hee hath sealed them with the holy Spirite, as yee may reade in the same Chapter. They are freed from the bondage of sinne by the Spirite, they walke in the spirite, they are led by the spirite, they shewe foorth by the fruites of the spirite, that the flesshe with the lustes & concupiscences thereof is crucified in them, and that they are regenerate and borne againe of the spirite, and so become new creatures in Christe, sinne is abominable vnto the, they hate & lothe it no lesse then deadly poison, they pant and breath to

Eph. 1. 1. 3. 4.

bee

be wholly set free from the remnantes of it. Righteousnesse is deare and precious vnto them, their ioy and heartes delight is in it. They sigh and grone, because they can not reach vnto the perfection of it. The word of God doth plainely teache, that the elect are thus as I haue shewed: and yet men say that election taketh away all care of godly life.

Ath. **I like not this, that men will say, they know God hath chosen them: how can they tell? Can any man tell what God will doe with him? Did God euer tell them, that they are elected?**

Zelot. Howe shoulde you like of this, when as yee like of no goodnesse. Howe shoulde you which are but a naturall man, iudge of thinges spirituall? You thinke a man can not tell what GOD will doe with him: because you are blinde and see not the way: yee suppose all other are so: you are an Infidell, or els ye might plainely heare God speake in his worde, and tell which shall bee saued, and which are in the way to damnation. Doe yee suppose that it is vncertayne when the scripture telleth a man howe hee shall knowe that hee is chosen, if the worde

of God tell him he is chosen, hath not God himselfe then told him? Read the first Chapiter of the second Epistle of Peter, & there ye shall see how a man shall knowe certainly that hee is elected, and that hee shall neuer fall. For if a man feele that God teacheth him by his spirite, and renueth him by repentance, he is sure (because God saith so) that hee is chosen to eternall life: if at any time hee feele the grace of God weake in him, then doth he doubt and stagger, but yet his fayth getteth the vpper hande. On the other side, when a man liueth in sinne, and obeyeth vnrighteousnes: God telleth him playnly that he is in the way to damnation. And therefore all those which doe not finde in them selues the spirituall birth at the least begunne whereby they may assure them selues that they be chosen: May certainly say, that as yet ther state is damnable.

Ath. Howe can yée say their state is damnable, so long as they beléeue? Can men doe more then beléeue?

Zelot. They doe not beleeue: for if they beleeue, then are they sure that God loueth them, what is it else which they beleeue? If they knowe they be in fauour with God,

God, it is because he chose them in Christe. If they doubt of Gods fauour, then do they doubt whether God heareth their prayers, and therfore they shal not receiue any thing at the handes of God, as yee may learne in the Epistle of Saint Iames, Chapter. 1. ver. 6, 7. and although many of the faythfull doe doubt & stagger oftētimes, yet they are not like the vnfaithfull which continue in the same, but they get the vpper hād, they strive by praier & by al other meanes which God hath appointed, to strengthen and increase their faith, their knowledge, their repentāce, & so farre to grow in grace, vntil they come to assurance that God hath chosen them. As for the wicked they know of no such faith, that a man may atteine to assurāce of his election: they labour not about any such matter, but cōtinue stil in their blind doubts, setting all vpon hazard: and as for their doing what they can, it is nothing, they cannot but sin, & therfore be damned, howsoeuer they seem for to do good workes, yet before god they are no good workes because they proceed not of faith, but from the flesh: they are not graffed into the true vine Christ, & for that cause can bring forth no fruit. Iohn. 15. 4. 5.

Ath. If GOD had chosen men before the worlde to bee saued, Wherefore did

Christ dye for to saue them? If they should be saued before, his death was more then nedeed. Wherefore should men be taught, wherefore should they pray? all these are in vaine.

Zelot. You are like vnto a man whiche doeth make strife and debate betweene brethren and friendes: you woulde set prayer and teaching, and the death of Christ, together by the eares with Gods election: but doe what ye can, all these will agree well together, they be so vnseparably knit in friedship. God hath chosen men for to be redeemed in his sonne. For the scripture sheweth that we are chosen in Christ. He hath chosen men to bee instructed and called by preaching the word, hee hath chosen men for to call vpon him, and to worship him, in holynes and righteousnes, all the dayes of their life.

Eph. 1. 4. 5. 6
Tit. 2. 11. 12. 14.

Ath. We speak much of preaching, preaching as though it were so needful: Can they make the word of God better then it is? Is there not enough set downe in the Bible for men to read, wherefore should we adde more? Can not men read that? Is not reading preaching?

Zelot. Now ye seeke new starting holes.

There

There is some Colt so wilde, that hee will trouble halfe a dosen light men of foote for to driue him: he wil in at euery gappe, turne at euery lane, and out at euery gate. Euen so I can liken the reasoning with such as you are: ye haue so many by shiftes, so many cauils, so many turninges, that ten of the best learned in this lande, shall hardly be able to keepe ye in the way. But we must not leaue yee thus, but bring yee into the way againe. Preaching is not so needefull, they can make the word of God no better then it is: why mā they do not preach for to make the word better, but for to make you better. There is enough set downe in the Bible, but you vnderstand litle enough of it. Men may reade it, as a great number doe which peruert it, and are nothing bettred by it, because they seeke not helpe for to vnderstand it. Reading say you is preaching. Truely then I knowe a man which hath a little daughter, that is a trimme preacher. I perceiue our lande is full of preachers: but yet in deede not such as Saint Paule describeth. For the litle girle is not apt to teach, able to instruct, to exhort, to conuince, nor to deuide or cut the word of God aright, nor to open the Mysteries of it. If yee leape ouer many of

1 Tim. 3. 2 Tim. 2. 3. 16 & 4. 2 Tit. 1. 9.

these

these ditches, yee will breake your necke in the ende: yee are a very skilfull man, when ye take expounding and applying the word of God, for to be adding: for yee aske why they should adde.

Ath. Are not men allowed which are but readers, euen by the learnedest in the lande? Doe ye finde fault with the Bishops? or are ye one of those which doe not allowe of Bishops? for such fellowes there be nowe a dayes.

Zelot. I woulde yee should know that I am none of those which disalow Bishops; when as the woorde of God doeth sette it downe to bee a woorthye worke: it is a verye reuerende office, and exceedingly they are to bee blamed, which doe contemne it, or deface it. GOD hath ordeyned the office of Bishoppes in his Church, for to gouerne and feede his people: such as would abolishe this ordinance of God, doe resist God, and are enemies vnto the Church of Christ.

Ath. By my fayth, I like ye the better for that.

Zelot. I lyke you neuer the better for your swearing.

Ath. I am not so precise as to make any

any account of swearing by my faith.

Zelot. I thinke so, for fayth is no more account made of, then as a packe horse, al is layde on his backe.

Ath. I pray God we may doe no worse, and then I hope we shall doe well enough: are you without sinne? I doubt not but ye will commit as great offence to GOD as this, or euer the weeke be ended. Pull the beame out of your owne eye: If euery man would looke to himselfe, there should not be so much finding fault one with an other.

Zelot. Where learne yee that prayer in the scripture? The Prophet Dauid, Psal. 19. Prayeth to be cleansed from his secrete sinnes, although they bee neuer so small. Where learned yee to speake after this sort, no woorse, and that yee hope then to doe well enough? Is it nothing to breake so straight a rule of Christ? Doe yee not thinke that children dying in they r infancy, before they can speake or worke, are damned for lesse sins. I speake of such as are not of Gods church. When as they haue only originall sin. You know not frō how cuill a roote this sinne doth spring: neyther doe ye know the foule-

foulenesse of sinne, and therefore yee cannot tell howe much God doth abhorre it, and condemne it. For this cause, beeing as full of filthie vices and prophane sinnes as yee can be thrust, and of such in deede as God doeth curse and hate: because they seeme small vnto you, ye suppose ye shal do well enough. What if I haue greater in me, or that I shal commit greater as you say, before the weeke be ended, doth that excuse you? I haue many secret sinnes in me, which I do not see, because I doe not perfectly vnderstand the law of God: for these I do earnestly intreat the Lord to make them knowne vnto me, by giuing me more perfect vnderstanding of his will, and also to giue me power for to cast them out. I haue also many sinnes in me which I see and knowe, that cleaue so fast, that I cannot vtterly cast them foorth: notwithstanding, I hate & abhorre them, I am wearie of them, I fight against them, I grone and sigh in my heart with sorrow for them, I feele no sweetnesse in them, for they are more bitter then Gall vnto my soule. I am exceeding glad when I can suppresse them, I haue professed and vowed a continuall warre against them, & although I preuaile not so farre as to be vtterly ridde

of

of them, yet I labour by meditation in Gods woorde, and by heartie prayer, to bring them vnder, that they raigne not ouer me, nor that I may not agree with them: and although I be not able to become perfect, yet with all the might I can, I straine and breath to come as nigh perfection as I can: my desire is good to reach it, and although I finde that I come many degrees short, yet I approche nearer and nearer. This is true repentance, this is that whiche Saint Paule setteth forth in him selfe. Rom. 7. Phil. 3. With this I knowe GOD is pleased, without this there can not bee any seruice done to God.

Ath. I like not when men will spie a mote in another mans eye.

Zelot. Our Saviour Christe doth not forbid to espy a mote in an other mans eye, for we are commaunded to admonish one an other, whatsoeuer it bee, wherein we doe amisse: but such as you, which can not abide to be admonished, doe euer alleadge that saying of Christe, as though hee had spoken it vnto this ende, that one shoulde not admonishe an other. It is a foule hypocrisie for a man to bee curious in re- Matth 7.3. Luk 6.41. 42

proouing ſmall faultes in other, and make no conſcience of great and foule vices in him ſelfe. Euerie man ought to looke vnto him ſelfe, and euery man is bounde by the worde of God, and charitie, to looke vnto others, and to conuerte them from their ſinnes if they can. To conuert a ſinner from going aſtray, and to ſaue a ſoule from death. As Saint Iames ſpeaketh, Cap. 5. 20. And ſo to couer a multitude of ſinnes, is a bleſſed thing, and ought, to moue men with diligence to vſe charitable admonition.

Ath. If they would doe it in charitie, I could like of it: but men haue no loue, they doe it becauſe they are precyſe and captious.

Zelot. Let a man ſee yee commit any foule crime, and reprooue yee, your anſwere is by and by, yee may not iudge: when as the matter is plain and doth iudge it ſelfe: Now when a man doth admoniſh yee according as God commaundeth, yee are bolde with the ſame mouth, whiche ſaide, yee ought not to iudge, for to iudge him affirming that he doth it of a captious and quarelling minde: the thing beeing ſo exceeding good of it ſelfe: who made you able for to ſee into the heart of a man, and

to

to finde that hee doth it not well. You are those of whom the Prophet speaketh, Woe be vnto those which call good euill, and euill good. If hee bee a man spotted with vices himselfe, and doth reproue another, not caring for to amend, ye may boldly say he doth it of an euill minde: for can hee be charitable vnto other men, to seeke their conuersion, and not to bee charitable vnto him selfe to seeke his owne saluation? Or can hee hate vngodlines in other, and not hate it in him selfe? Isaiah 5.20.

Ath. Well, the best of vs all may bee amended, wee haue all infirmities: what would yee haue more then this, at the last for to call for mercy: If a man be sorie and aske God forgiuenes, is he not euen as well as they which are the most precise: the mercy of God must saue all: and what would ye haue a man care for more then a to be saued: I praye God I may haue time to repent in the end.

Zelot. Here is good stuffe, here is sound diuinitie: I may well terme this reason euen the porter of hell, for it openeth euen the widest gate, that a thousand may goe in on a rancke.

This is true, that the best of vs all may be amended, & that we haue all infirmities: but ye doe wickedly apply it, for when ye should reason thus, the best may bee amended, the most holie are spotted, and therefore as Saint Paule doth teache, they must indeuour for to proceede forwarde: for the worde of God willeth men to striue and contende euen against all vncleanesse, and neuer to cease, but to come as nygh perfection as is possible. But you reason quite contrarye, that because the best are sinners, therfore mē are to make small account to amend. Ye should thinke thus, the most godly haue need to sorrow and mourne, & proceed in repentāce, therfore how much need, haue such as are grosse sinners. For our Sauiour Christ doth shew, Iohn. 8. 34 That whosoeuer committeth sinne, is the seruant of sin: Nowe so long as a man is the seruant of sin, so long is hee not the seruant of God, for no man can serue two so contrarie masters, Saint Iohn sayeth, hee that committeth sinne, is of the Deuill. Where learned ye this, that a man may continue in his vices all his life, and at the last call for mercye? God commandeth men to repent speedily, and not to put off from day to day. Hee threat-

Iohn 8. 34

Math 6. 24

1. Iohn 3. 8.

Luk 13. 34.

threatneth exceeding ſharply, in the firſte Chapiter of the Prouerbes, that when hee hath called and cryed vnto men for to returne from their euill wayes, and they haue refuſed, that at the laſt, they ſhall call and not bee hearde: hee will laugh when their deſtruction commeth vppon them: they ſhall ſeeke him, but not finde him. Doe you thinke that when God hath called and we refuſe, that wee ſhall not call and hee refuſe? *This word is not at what but if a sinner Repent.*

Prouerb. 1. 24-27

v. 28

Ath. The Scripture ſayth, that what time ſoeuer a ſinner doth repente him of his ſinne, God will forgiue him.

Ezek. 18. 21. 27

Zelot. If the ſcripture ſpeake any thing to the comfort of the ſorowfull heart, the Deuill doth teache the impenitent for to abuſe it to their hardening. It is moſt true, that at what time ſoeuer a ſinner doth repēt, his ſinnes are all forgiuen, but is it in a mans choiſe for to repent when he will, can hee take a newe heart when it doth pleaſe him, can hee haue the newe byrth, and a ryght ſpirite when he will? It is God which doth create a man a newe, or maketh him a newe creature in Chriſt, when it pleaſeth hym. A man needeth not for to care for any thing but to be ſaued, but that is not ſo eaſie a

Luk.13.24. matter as men thinke. Striue for to enter in
Math.7.13 at the ſtraight gate (ſayth Chriſt) for many
14 ſhall ſtriue and ſhal not enter. The way is narowe and the gate is ſtraight which leadeth vnto life, and few there be which find it: and if this be true which you ſay, that a man may liue in ſin all his life, and at the laſt be ſaued euen for vttering a few words, then the way is broad and eaſie, who cannot finde it, who almoſt doth not walke in it? But alas, it is a broken ſtaffe which men doe leane vnto. god is very merciful, but not to thoſe which deſpiſe his Goſpell, for vengeance belongeth vnto ſuch: it is vnpoſſible (ſaith the holy Ghoſt. Hebr.6.) that ſuch ſhould eſcape. And although ye haue neuer ſo long time to repent, if God doe not worke it in yee, you ſhall die in that blindneſſe and hardneſſe of heart in which ye haue liued: we muſt ſeeke
1.pet.1.23. in our life time to be begotten by the word: for the ſcripture ſaith God doth beget his children by that. Iames.1.21.

Ath. Shall not a man hope for to repent at the laſt?

Zelot. Marke what repentance is: and try whether ye can repent now, if ye cannot, what moueth ye to thinke that yee ſhall bee able then?

Ath.

Ath. I hope I dó repent now, and shal doe at the end.

Zelot. Repentance is a returning home vnto God from all euill vices and corrupte desires which are in the flesh & in the heart. To be renued by repentance, cannot be but where a man is renued in knowledge, for that is one part of the Image of God which must be restored in vs: Read in the 4. Chapter to the Ephe. from the 17 verse forwarde. If a man continue in darknesse, he doth not repent: He which cõmitteth his foule sinnes still, although it bee but in the desire of his heart, hath not repẽted. He which doth not feele sorow and griefe, and hath not a broken and contrite hearte, and a sorowful spirit, hath not repented: hee which doth not eschue euill and doe good, hath not repẽted: All these are taught by the worde, for that is it by which we must cleanse our waies & therfore ye may boldly say, that he which learneth not out of Gods worde to repent, cannot repent for although if it were possible he could repent for al other sinnes, yet this one sinne, to set light by the instruction of the Gospell, will make still woorse then they of Sodome, as our Sauiour doth tell vs Matth. 11. 23. 24. Repent psal. 34. 14.

Ath. Will you condemne those which call for mercy at their ende which neuer repented before?

Zelot. We may not pronounce vpon any one man, because God only seeth what is in man. But yet wee may boldely goe so farre as the word of God doth leade vs: and by it we may see what God requireth and what God doth cõdemne. We may see that the common & generall repẽtance which al professe at their end is not so much as a shadow of true repentance: repentance cannot bee in a man, especially vpon a sodeine, but hee must needes feele a wonderfull change in himselfe: he must needes bee able for to say I haue repented, I knowe and feele that I am a newe man, and therefore because I knowe most certainely that there is repentance in mee, I knowe most certainly that I shall be saued: for God promiseth saluation vnto euerie one which doeth repent. In the common repentance men feele no such thing. But are still (as they may be well enough) in doubt of saluation.

Ath. Shall not all suche as call vppon God be heard, surely I dare not but thinke they shall.

Zelot

Zelot. I am ſure becauſe the Lord doth ſpeake it, That whoſoeuer doth call vppon him ſhall bee ſaued. But yet yee muſt put this in, that then they muſt pray in fayth, as for the prayers of a wicked mã, which doth not repẽt, & therfore hath not the true faith they are no prayers before God, although hee cry lowde, or call neuer ſo often: for vnto ſuche the Lorde ſpeaketh in the firſte Chapter of the Prophet Iſaiah, When yee ſtretch foorth your hands, I will turne away mine eyes from yee. Alſo if yee multiplie your prayer I will not heare. Likewiſe the holy Ghoſte ſaith by Salomon in the Prouerbes that the ſacrifice of the wicked is an abhomination. And in the ſame booke it is ſayd, Hee that turneth away his eare from hearing the law, euen his prayer ſhall bee abhominable, and therfore in the latter ende of the fourth Chapter of Eccleſiaſtes, hee aduiſeth men when they come into the houſe of God, to take heede to their feete: and to be readier to heare them to offer the ſacrifice of fooles, For (ſaith hee) they know not that they doe euill. Now yee ſhall finde many men cry in their miſeries and make great confeſſion of their vngodly life: but yet without true repentance, as it is mani-

Iſaiah 1.

pro. 15.8. & 21.27.

Eccl. 4.17 & 5.1.

sell, for so soone as they prosper againe, yee shall see them returne to their olde byas: if they had truely repented, then shoulde it euer continue with them, many that liue in malice, so soone as they bee dangerously sicke, will be readie to aske forgiuenes, and to forgiue all the worlde. They knowe it booteth not to beare malice any longer, but so soone as they be able to craulle out of their bedde, and to stande vppon their legges, yee shall see their olde wythered malice (as it seemed) spring a freshe agayne: which is a strong proofe, that they neuer truly repented, howsoeuer they thoughte they did. And euen so is it in all other sinnes, they seeme vnto men for to repent they aske God forgiuenesse, but yet the hearte abideth still the same that it was before God: there is no change in them before God: they haue not put of the sinnfull bodye of the flesh: there is no change in them before God: howsoeuer they seeme to bee chaunged before men. This counterfet repentance maketh men bold al their life to despise the holy word of God, which should instruct and guide them: it causeth them at their end not to feare the wrath of God, nor the vengeance to come: because

they

they think God is satisfied with this repentance, and also because they knowe not their sinnes, they suppose that they are but ouer the shoes, when as they are drowned in the goulfe of vncleanneſſe ouer head and eares.

Ath. God helpe vs if it be thus: howe shall weye men doe then?

Zelot. Men must apply them selues all their life to seeke for the knowledge of God, to increase in fayth and repentance that when they come to their ende. they may haue a testimonie of conscience, that they haue feared God.

Likewise when yee come to a sicke man and aske howe hee doth, if hee can but say, as it pleaseth God, yee answere, that is enough neighbour, holde yee there: If hee say I haue offended GOD, and I pray God haue mercy vpon me, there needeth no more as you thinke. Yee shoulde teach them the Lawe, that they may see howe they haue offended God, yee shoulde shew them the fearefull curse, and horrible vengeance due vnto sinne, that so they may be stricken with remorse and sorrowe: yee should shewe them also the glad tidings of the Gospell, and what Christe offereth

vnto

vnto the penitent sinner: yee should teach them what holinesse God requireth at their hande, howe they may come vnto it, what promise they haue made to god of it in baptisme. Yee shoulde instruct them in all the principall poyntes of the fayth. That so they may haue the renuing fayth, which shall iustifie and saue them.

Ath. What difference can you shew betweene those which are not taught as you woulde haue them, and such as haue knowledg, they can no more but repent, call for mercy, and beleeue. And this doe they aswel as the other.

Zelot. You thinke there is no difference, but there is this difference, that the one part doth beleeue and repent in deede, and the other but in worde: as our Sauiour Christe Matth 15. alleadgeth the saying of God by his Prophete. This people drawe neere mee with their mouth, and honour me with their lippes, but their heart is farre from me. Esaia 29.

Ath. What is ment when a man doth speake with his mouth, and meaneth not with his hearte, but these haue a good meaning in their minde.

Zelot. It is meant when a man approacheth

cheeth with his mouth, & hath ſtill a wicked heart, and an euill conſcience, for thoſe doe remoone a man ſo far frō god, that no kind intent can make him neere vnto him. God looketh for great thinges in the heartes of thoſe which call vpon him.

Ath. I thinke God accepteth the prayer of the honeſt poore man, aſwell as of any other, and will heare him as ſone, as he will heare the prayer of thoſe which know moſt, and are the beſt learned. Deu. 10. 17.

Zelot. God is no accepter of perſons, hee heareth the poore aſwell as the riche, the vnlearned as well as the learned, ſo that their prayers bee made aright. But if yee ſpeake of thoſe honeſt men which are ſo called, and yet are voyde of all knowledge of Gods woorde, and of religion, it is an eaſie matter for to prooue that their prayers are not good.

Ath. Can yée haue any better prayer then the Lordes prayer, when they prays that, can yée requier more?

Zelot. There can bee no better prayer then the Lordes Prayer, and he which prayeth that right muſt needes bee ſaued: But let mee aske you this queſtion, what if a man pray the Lordes prayer with his mouth

and

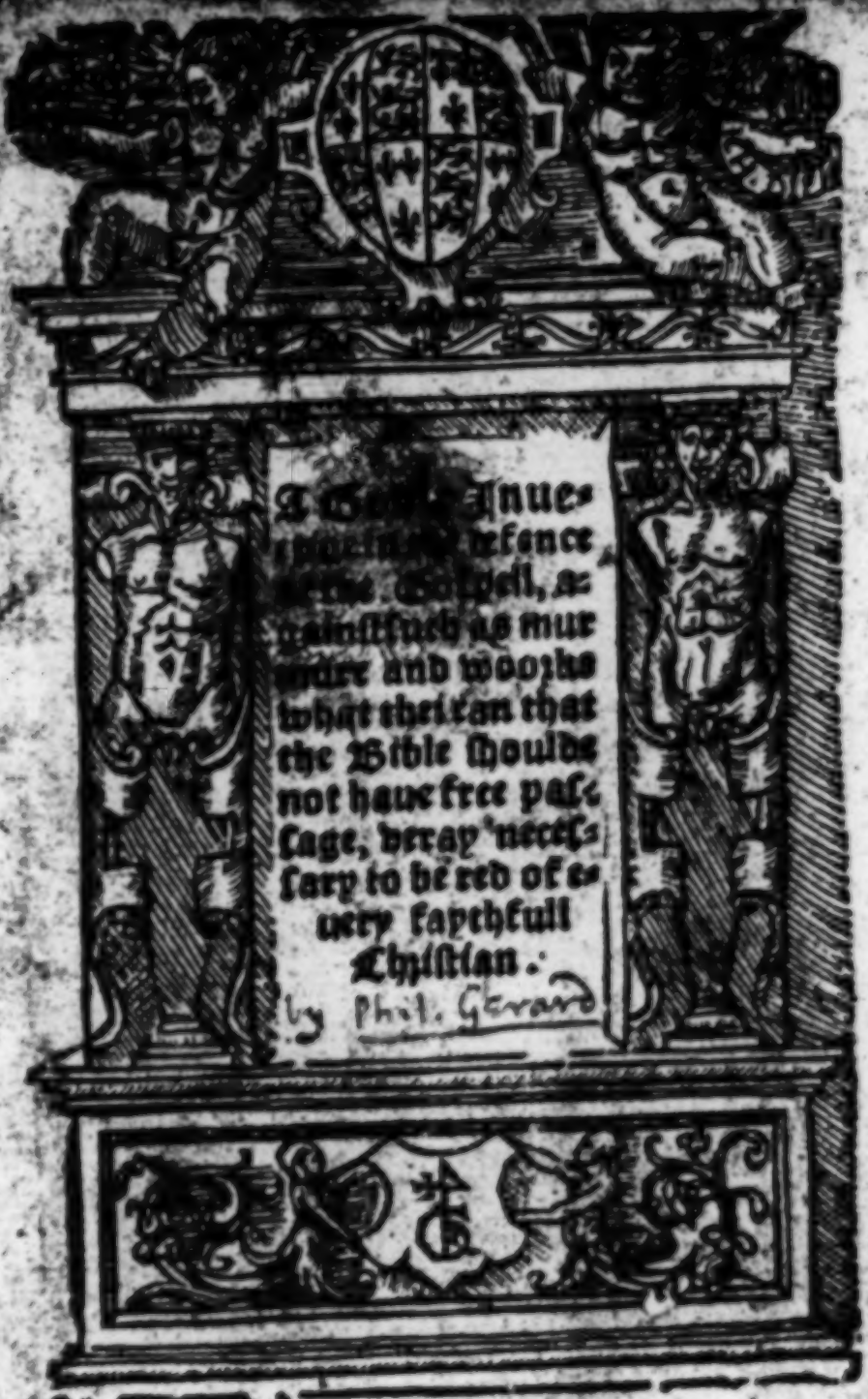
and regardeth it not in his heart, shall his prayer be good?

Ath. His prayer cannot be good, he doth but mocke God.

Zelot. Then tell me this, a man prayeth thus, hallowed be thy name, in word he seemeth to desire that the name of GOD may be sanctified and honoured: hee goeth his way, and blaspheemeth the name of God, or heareth it blasphemed and neuer careth, rayleth vpon his worde, dishonoureth him, doe yee not thinke that hee made a sweete prayer? In lyke manner hee sayth, thy will bee done in earth as it is in heauen: hee goeth away and is so farre from desiring to doe the will of God, that hee neuer careth for to knowe it. Whereby it is euident that he little meant with his hearte, that which he saide with his tongue.

Moreouer, he would seeme in woordes to craue of God that hee and others might doe the will of God in earth, as the Angelles doe in heauen: and yet tell him when hee breaketh the will of God, and his answere is, I am not so precise, I am not so curious, I will not bee so holy, you are full of the spirite: and then hee will euen reporch

that



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